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FIGOPEDIA

Jérémie Bonamant Teboul



LIGHT & COLOUR - THEORY & PRACTICE



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FIGOPEDIA

Masterclass techniques for fantastic figures
VOLUME 1: Colour and light, theory and practice



Even if I'm the most visible part of the FIGOPEDIA iceberg, I'm not the only one responsible for what you're holding in your hands (or between your feet if you paint at the same time as you read). So I would like to pay tribute and to thank from the bottom of my heart the fine, persevering, devoted and inspired team which worked day and night to create this book! Clap, clap, clap ... and off to volume II!

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Foreword by Allan carrasco

"Jeremie belongs to these people who are everywhere. Always part of the "good times", more often than not their origin.

He loves life itself with an insatiable energy that seems never-ending. It is always impressive, and a bit scary at time too, when he thinks of something next and then makes you part of it (laugh)!

Accepting who he is enables him to own his desires; his work reflects that: ever changing, a bit all over the place, never monotone!

He gives priority to creativity over maniacal technique, and he is right!"

I wrote these words not that long ago during a crossed interview. We know each other for more than twelve years. We shared a lot: trips, events; we lived together, shared a workshop and created (with others) a miniatures game company... let just say we know each other well.

I think that for anyone interested in miniatures, Jérémie Bonamant Teboul is a hallmark.

Over the years, Jérémie has assimilated techniques, methods and styles from all places that form this little world, both through his presence in most gatherings and his creative experimentations. He would be a sort alchemical poach in which you threw all sorts of ideas and knowledge from all over the world. He is the peculiar material that would come out of that mix, enriched fusion (blended with his own experience) equally useful to novices and professionals. I followed closely or from a distance most of his projects along the years. We owe him several tutorials, such as videos, books or articles, and classes. He is also the origin of many projects, current and past, about this passion, websites, various events, miniatures games, community projects in which many people were involved.

If I mentioned all of this, it is not (only) to praise the author, but to convey the fact that the experience he has to share has been forged during the last 20 years of the miniatures world and he experimented it all himself!

The book that you are about to discover is but the first of a long series about miniatures painting. Whatever your style or personal taste, it is clear to me that you will get something out it to improve no matter how you practice.

You will make the content even richer if you read it with an open mind and let your imagination flow.

Enjoy the read!

Allan Carrasco, mars 2014

A word from Jérémie

I'll never forget an experience from when I was a teenager, drawing a still life in art class. I was struggling with a piece of fruit which stubbornly refused to come to life on the page. The teacher came over, glanced at my drawing, and told me; "There are two things you need to do in order to represent a shape in three dimensions. First, make the object really sink into the page. Second, highlight it."



He took some dark blue and re-drew the shadow under my fruit then added a simple yellow-white bright spot on the highest, most convex part of my apple. It made all the difference. As if by magic, the drawing took on relief, scale, and vivacity. I'd never seen a blue apple before but I almost wanted to bite into this one!

Years later, I've retained two points from this lesson:

First: I didn't have a taste for representing reality exactly as it appeared, but rather as what it inspired in me, without being afraid to change it.

Second: You can save yourself a lot of time by listening to sensible, experienced advice.

WHY A BOOK ABOUT LIGHT AND COLOUR?

This "theoretical" volume is intended to be part of a series. I have chosen to approach our shared passion in a subjective more than technical manner in order to allow myself more freedom of expression. **I've made the deliberate choice to use technique to benefit expression rather than the other way around.** Above all, I want to encourage you to think about what you'd like to achieve rather than limiting yourself to what you already know you can do with the techniques already in your toolbox.

Controlling the sparkling interplay between light and colour (or their absences) is one of the most fascinating aspects of miniature painting. Mixing colours and using light are arts that every painter should try to develop and improve. Personally, I don't think that these are innate talents that you simply have or don't have. I believe that experience combined with theoretical study will help any determined painter progress towards mastery, and that is the philosophy I want to develop in this book.

In this first volume, I've tried to share the knowledge and advice which I would have liked to have had available when I started painting – things I would tell my younger self if I could go back in time. I hope that beginners as well as grizzled veterans will find a few useful tricks, techniques, and tools herein that will help them improve their art.

Jérémie BT

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A WORLD OF MINIATURES...

So that you, dear reader, can appreciate the actual size of the figures used in this book, here is a small explanation of the scales used on the models in this book. Along with its name and manufacturer (where commercially available), every miniature credited in the book includes information about its "scale". For example, "32mm" indicates that in this scale an average human subject measuring 1.80m will measure 32mm from feet to eyes in miniature. But the scale is not absolute! The miniature of a large monster in 32mm scale will be much larger than the miniature of a child in 32mm scale.

The majority of the miniatures of this book are drawn from magnificent, imaginary worlds of science-fiction and fantasy. I love to walk in these worlds as they are so visually different from our own. Where else can we cross paths with dragons and elves or watch knights battling wizards. I love the escapist possibilities they offer. Perhaps this comes from a desire to experience worlds which - contrary to our own - do not cynically collapse into relativism or nihilism? Perhaps it comes from a desire to develop my imagination and investigate new possibilities of composition, interpretation, light, colour... the very subject of the book you hold in your hands!

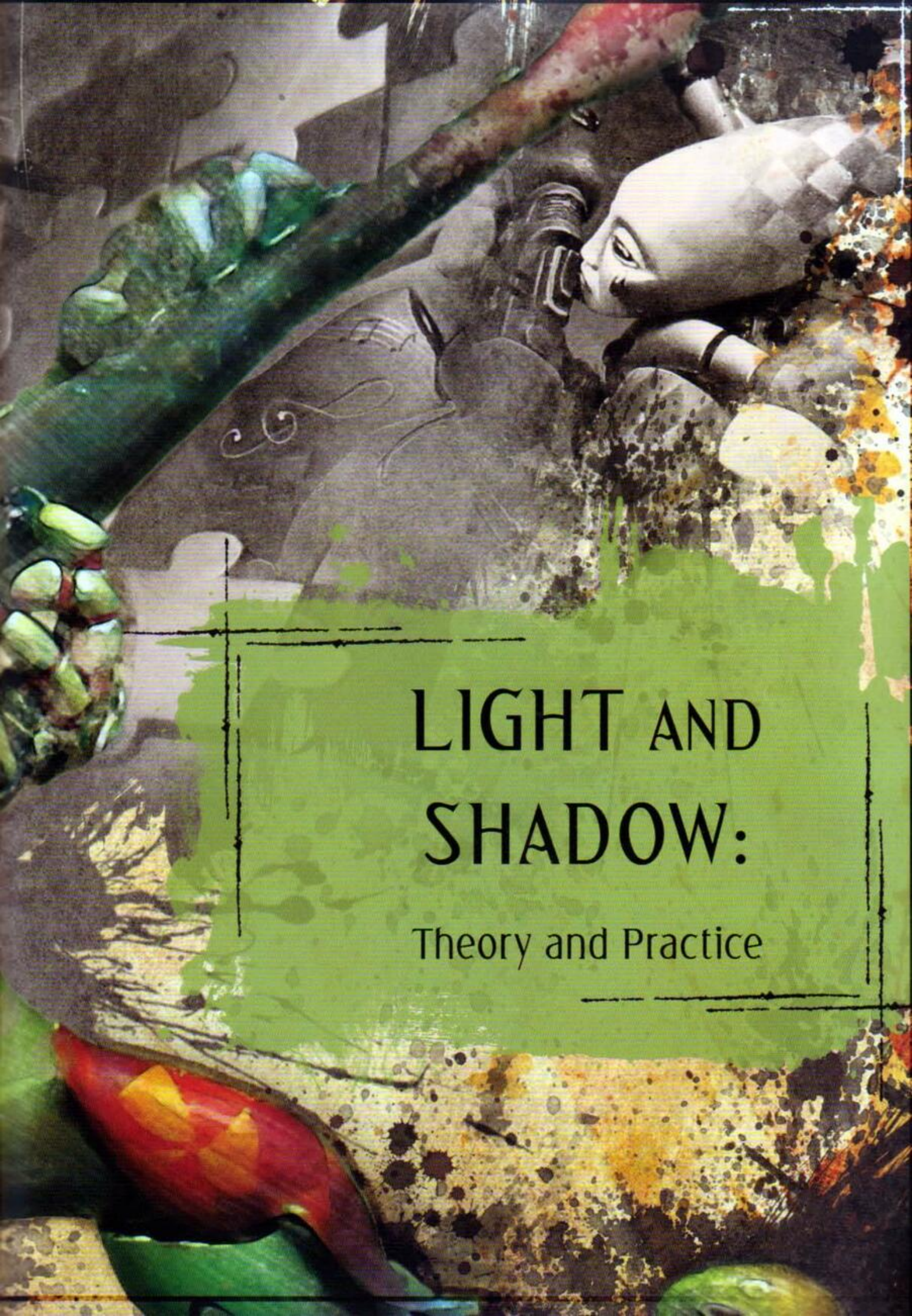
Far from leading us in circles or being ridiculous; these universes can reflect our own existence. Although imaginary, they often echo our own personalities. Some of my creations are very personal subjects. For example, "The Flute Player" is inspired by the myth of the pied piper of Hamelin, a German legend about a musician who charms the rats of a town and drowns them. My harlequin revisits the story and his music entices the little machines of war to follow him to their destruction - a wealth of symbolism and a personal variation on an old, recognizable tale...

Other miniatures are pieces commissioned by collectors (as indicated) and still others were created under my artistic direction and produced under the brand FIGONE. In all cases, I am their painter, and sometimes their sculptor too.

More of my work can be found on www.jeremiebt.com and www.figone.fr.







LIGHT AND SHADOW:

Theory and Practice

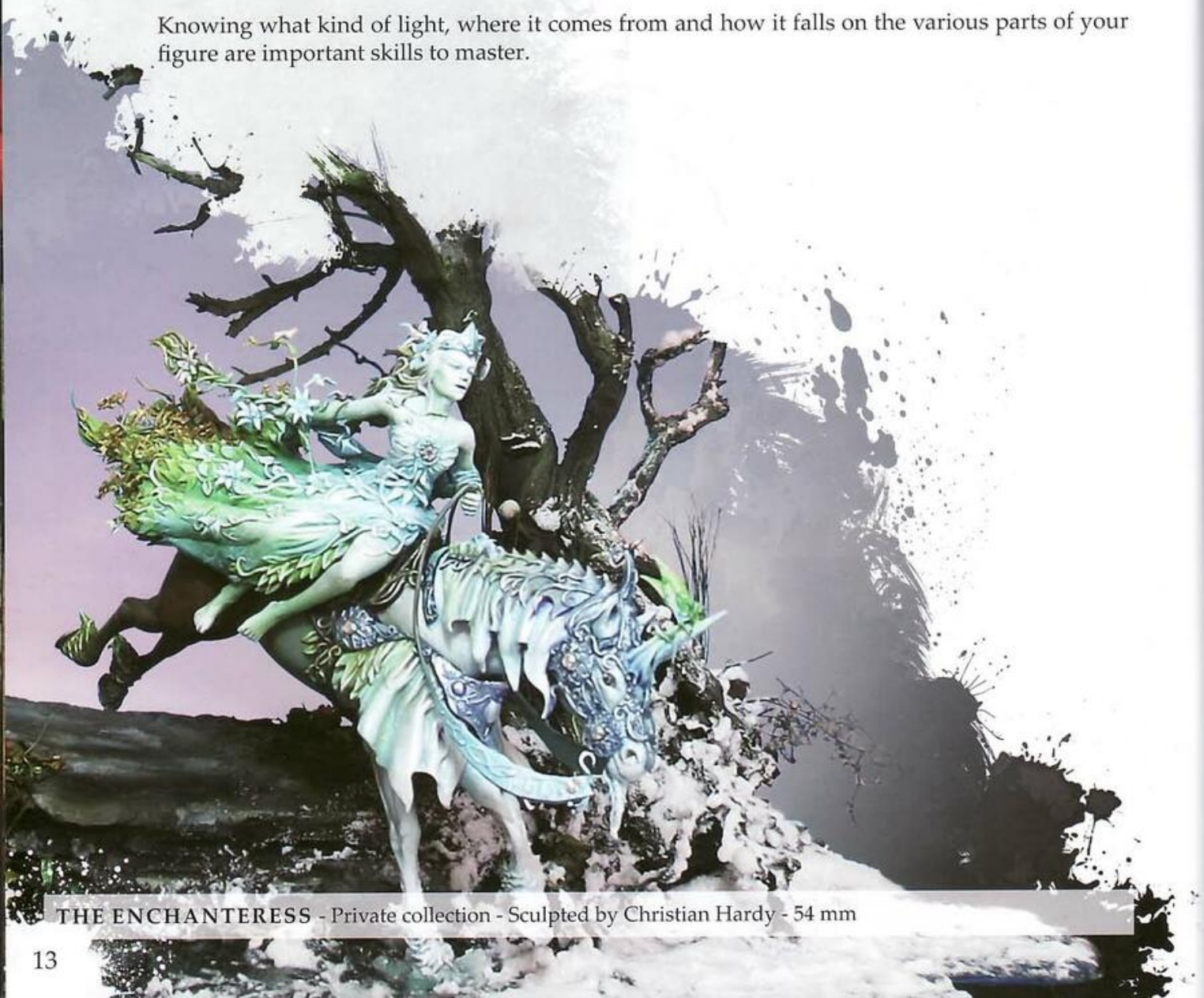
INTRODUCTION

Light is an intangible but vital element for the artist to understand. A painter skilled at representing light can add a timeless quality to their painting. This is one of the reasons why the work of world-renowned artist William Turner has remained so popular. His ability to interpret the atmospheric effects of the light continues to astonish all those who discover his paintings. Another example is the way black and white comic illustrators compose their drawings with halftones and zones of light and shadow. Similarly, film-noir directors of the nineteen thirties' Hollywood thrillers used light to add atmosphere to their movies.

The illusion of realism in a two-dimensional silhouette is obtained by adding perspective through the interplay of light and shadow. **A miniature is a kind of silhouette which we try to bring to life and light provides the required energy.** Since the model is already three dimensional, you might assume that once all the surfaces are painted with the right colours then the ambient lighting will make the model look realistic. However, because of their small size, natural lighting does not provide sufficient definition for a scale model to look realistic. Therefore, much of the painter's work involves interpreting the model's shape and volume with the correct positioning and representation of light and shadow painted on the figure and then defining those areas with your brushwork. This process will reinforce the three dimensionality of your miniature.

The miniature painter must explicitly define areas of light and shadow with painting to produce a realistic-looking figure. In this section, we will show you the ways in which light affects the figure, how to reproduce this with your painting, and how to use this to add drama and narrative to a miniature.

Knowing what kind of light, where it comes from and how it falls on the various parts of your figure are important skills to master.



THE ENCHANTERESS - Private collection - Sculpted by Christian Hardy - 54 mm

LIGHT INTENSITY

TIPS

Several aspects of the light on a miniature need to be considered when approaching a figure:

- The effects of light and shadow are not just about shape and volume, they can also **add drama to a scene, create atmosphere, and expand the figure's story.**
- The choice of the lighting source is an important part of the miniature painting process as it helps identify what parts to highlight and where to draw the viewer's attention.

Depending on the environment, light can be natural, artificial, raw, stark, attenuated, sculptural, vague, clear, flat, diffuse, coloured, or nuanced in many other ways. The Impressionist painters were exceptional observers of the mutable effects of light on a scene produced by the time of day and changing climatic conditions. For example, a series of Claude Monet's paintings depict "Waterloo Bridge" under different types of light.

Each study presents the same subject under a different luminous aspect, sometimes even obscuring the bridge in a whirlwind of coloured fog. This chapter will help you to master different light intensity and tones of varying brightness. It will help you choose how to apply them as thoughtfully as how you choose your miniatures.

The correct use of contrast between light and dark on both the whole model and on specific parts is an important tool to produce realistic looking models.

LIGHT DIRECTION

Before painting, you should imagine where the light illuminating your model is coming from so you can add the shadows and highlights accordingly. I categorize lighting styles - different patterns of light and shadow - commonly used by miniature painters - into one of three styles which can represent almost any lighting conditions which can be painted. They are: **general lighting, zenithal or lateral lighting, and multiple source lighting.**

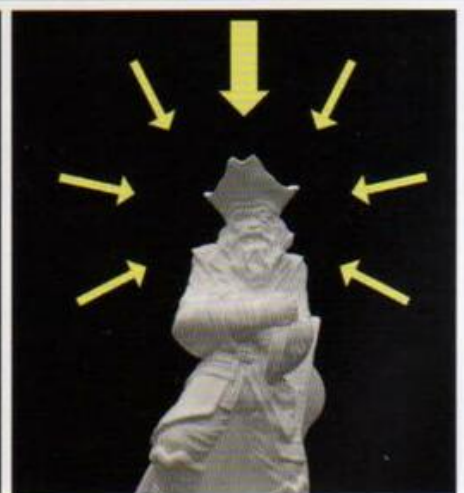
«THE COMPARAISON BETWEEN THREE DIFFERENT LIGHTING SOURCES»



Zenithal light



Lateral light



General light

General lighting

Novice painters tend to start by using general lighting for their miniatures. This is a popular technique for table-top and gaming miniatures and it is explained in detail in painting guides available from popular wargames companies. General lighting simulates a constant, diffuse illumination which falls equally on all parts of the model. **At its simplest, this technique consists of darkening the recesses and brightening the raised parts of the model without taking into account a specific direction of the light source.**

General lighting gives the finished model a neutral style. While it allows the viewer to concentrate on the representative details of the model (a uniform, a weapon, a pose) **it does little to evoke an emotional response** beyond an appreciation of the painter's technical skill. While general lighting is the most accessible lighting choice, it can limit the painter's range of artistic expression. The painter needs to compensate for this lack by maximising other aspects such as the colour scheme and contrasts.



GENERAL LIGHT

Grallapousah de Barback - GW - 54 mm

Zenithal lighting



ZENITHAL LIGHT

Queen of Death - Figone - 32 mm

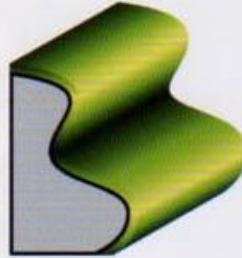
Zenithal lighting is currently a very popular lighting style which highlights the shapes and forms and produces a figure full of character when done correctly. The zenith is an imaginary point directly above a particular location or object. The light is imagined to be coming from a single source, such as the noonday sun or a powerful artificial light directly above the miniature. The miniature is then painted accordingly; remembering all the time that light travels in straight lines. **The model should be painted lighter where more light falls and darker on the opposite side where the light doesn't reach.** To understand the phenomenon of zenithal light, it might help to make a comparison with the rain (which also comes from above). The areas of the miniature which receive the most rain, the wettest ones, correspond to the areas that receive the most light; i.e. the top of the head, the shoulders, the bridge of the nose, or the thighs when perpendicular to the rainfall such as when cycling. (Believe me, I know what I am talking about!) A more painful example to help understand this principle is sunburn.

THE COMPARISON BETWEEN ZENITHAL LIGHT AND GENERAL LIGHT

Zénithal light



General light



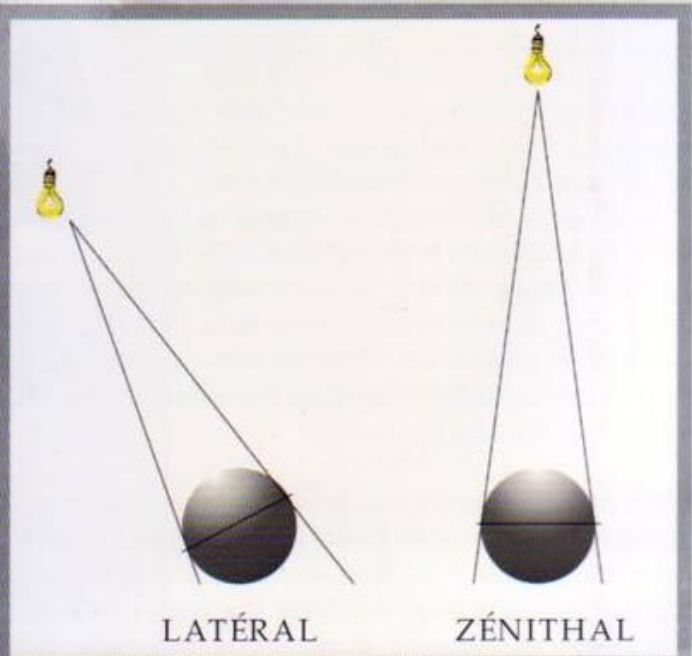
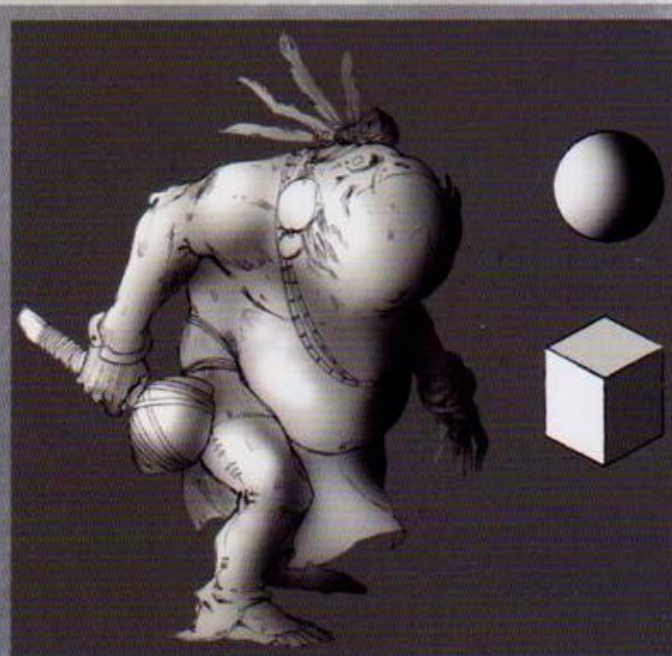
If you look at an unfortunate beach-goer after too much sun, you will notice that the sunburned parts are those situated on the most exposed areas, where the sun hits directly (shoulders, forehead, nose, etc.), whereas protected areas such as the armpits and throat, those areas in shadows, are untouched.

The play of light and shadow from zenithal light is currently a very popular choice for miniature painters, including myself, and it will be the type of lighting I'll use most frequently in this book.

Once you are comfortable with zenithal lighting you can start to experiment and personalise your lighting sources...

Lateral lighting

As you become more experienced, you'll begin to notice that zenithal light from above is not always the best or only choice for a particular model. The orientation of a given miniature, the way it's posed to the left or the right, may encourage lighting from the side, or lateral lighting. We want to show the figurine in its best light from an aesthetic point of view, and guide the viewer toward the miniature at this preferred angle. This way of lighting is often very dynamic, even more so if the character is positioned diagonally on its base. The shadows fall laterally, causing one side to be strongly illuminated and the other to be shady twilight.



The position of the lighting is often guided by the orientation of the face. The demeanour of such a figure can seem determined or quizzical or to be somehow attracted to the light source. This was considered an unusual lighting choice a few years ago but it is becoming more popular thanks to its originality and to its dramatic effect.



LATERAL LIGHT - Reaper Miniature - Sculpted by Jérémie Bonamant Teboul - 54 mm

Secondary and multiple lighting sources

Incorporating a secondary light source, also known as object source lighting (OSL), is simulating illumination produced by an element close to or actually part of the miniature itself such as a torch or streetlight or something held by the character such as a lamp or a magic item. The light emitted by such items is strong enough to dominate the main lighting style of the miniature in certain areas (local lighting), be it general, zenithal or lateral. The OSL can also be suggested off scene, such as a campfire burning near the miniature without actually being modelled on the base.

Painting these effects will have two important repercussions. The first one is **to create a new set of light and shadow**, defined according to the closeness and to the intensity of the light source. The second is to **modify the colour tints of elements affected by this lighting source** if it is coloured.

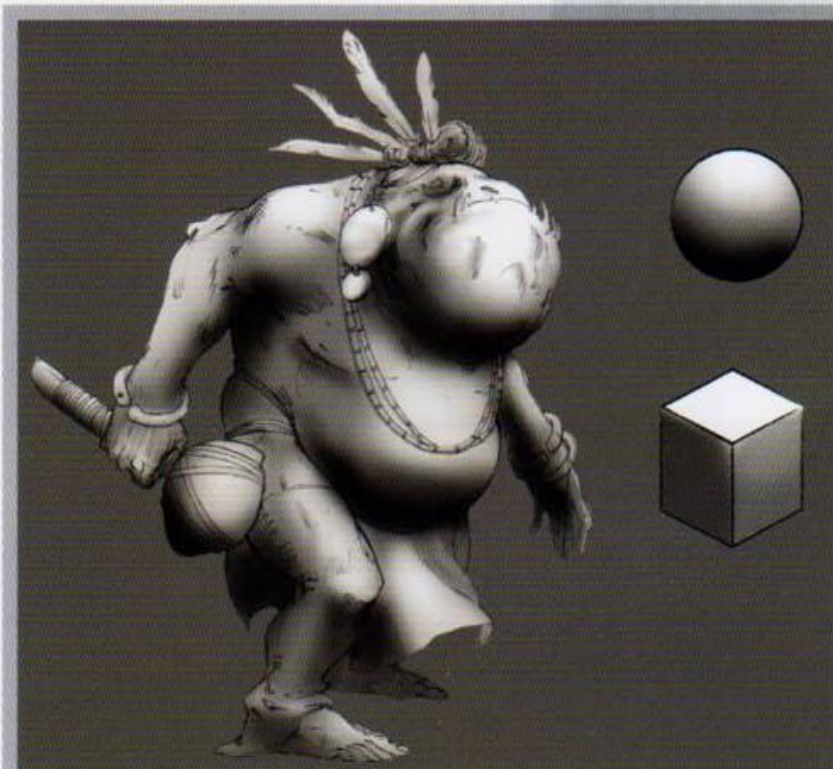


MULTIPLE LIGHT SOURCES
Qui Lee Qin - Figone - 32 mm

EXPLORING THE POWER OF ZENITHAL LIGHT

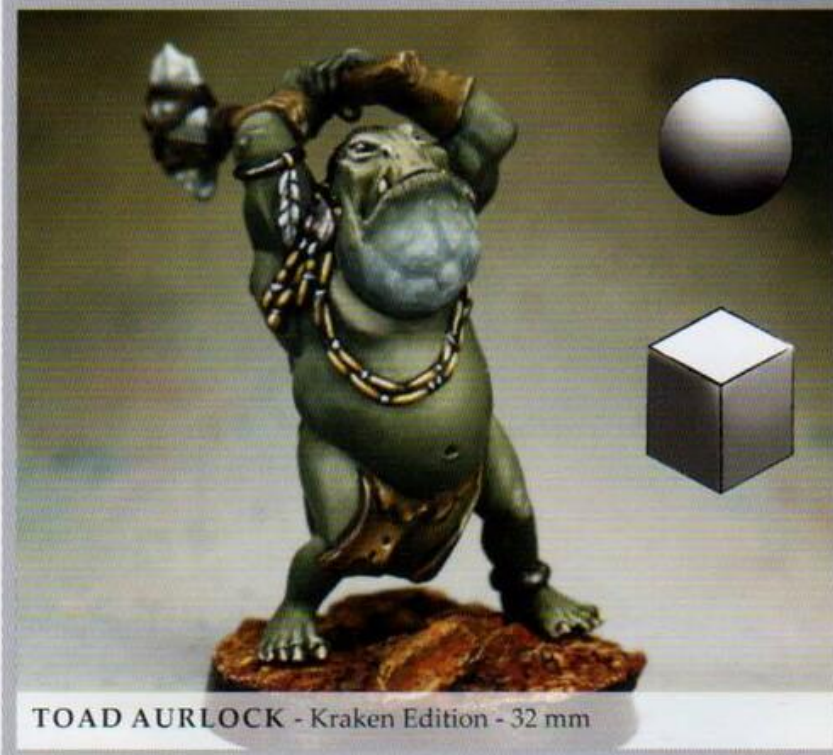
Successful lighting is about placing lighter and darker colours in the right places, which depends on the shape and texture of the surfaces to be represented, as well as the location of the light source illuminating them. Much of what follows is a theoretical examination of a complex subject and it will, by its very nature, be incomplete. However, you should be able to learn enough from this book to start applying these concepts during your own painting sessions.

The theory of zenithal lighting



As explained above, the technique of zenithal lighting is to paint your miniature as if it is lit from a light source shining from above. The concept of zenithal lighting is easier to visualise and understand when illustrated with images and photos. However, even when well understood the application can be elusive and a good dose of perseverance is always helpful in achieving satisfactory results.

Here, we explain the basic principles to make it easy for beginners to apply zenithal light before going on to the more detailed explanations.



TOAD AURLOCK - Kraken Edition - 32 mm

The best way to use zenithal light while maximising its influence on the volumes of your miniature is to first imagine a light source as a single light bulb at a fixed point situated above the miniature.

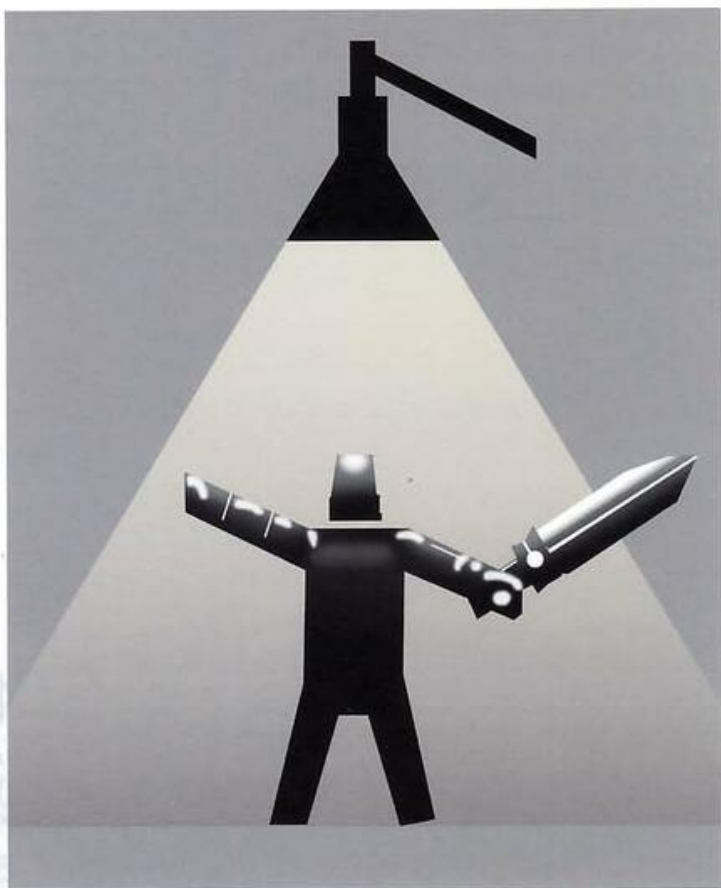
Secondly, **remember that light always travels in a straight line.** According to the shape and to the orientation of the volumes with regard to the fixed light source, the shadows are thrown **under reliefs** and the areas the most exposed to the light are **much brighter**.

LIGHT AND SHADOW: theory and practice

For example, if we take a naked, static miniature standing under a lamppost, the top of the body, which is exposed the most to the light, is brighter than the legs. While painting, the most marked highlights will be on the shoulders and the top of the body. The colour we paint will become darker and darker as we descend towards the figure's feet. The phenomenon becomes more complex if the subject is dressed, because it is then necessary to take into account the folds in the clothes and their own exposure to the light (with every fold generating its own shadows).

Be aware that this explanation is purely theoretical and incomplete. It does not take into account projected shadows, the artistic choices of the painter, the peculiarity of certain materials, or other specific cases which we shall come to later.

What will be described are the basic rules and parameters; similar to the computations used to simulate 3D graphics. These simple examples correspond to ideal, smooth, opaque, matte shapes that are seldom seen in nature.



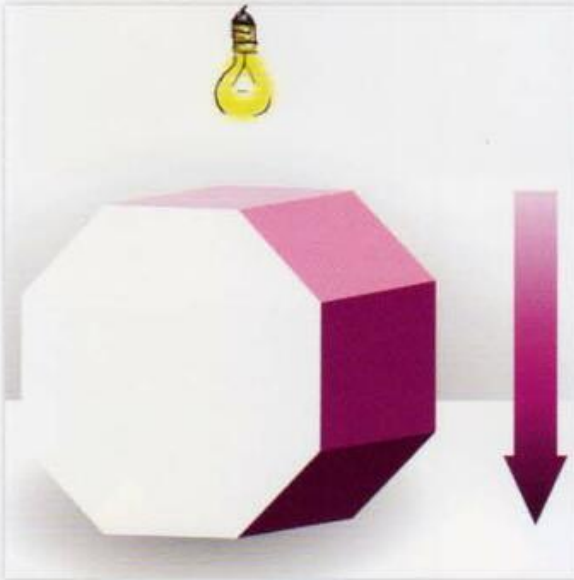
AURLOCKS - Kraken Edition - 32 mm



GEOMETRIC PRIMITIVES UNDER ZENITHAL LIGHTING

The term geometric primitive is taken from 3D computer graphics and refers to the simplest geometric objects that a system can draw. Examining how these simple forms appear under different lighting conditions is a great way to learn the principles of light and shadow.

A simple shape with flat surfaces



A golden rule: **The highest, flat surfaces receive the most light because they are completely perpendicular to the axis of incoming light rays.** Being flat, the surface will have the same colour throughout with no gradient because the light rays will strike the surface at the same angle across the whole surface.

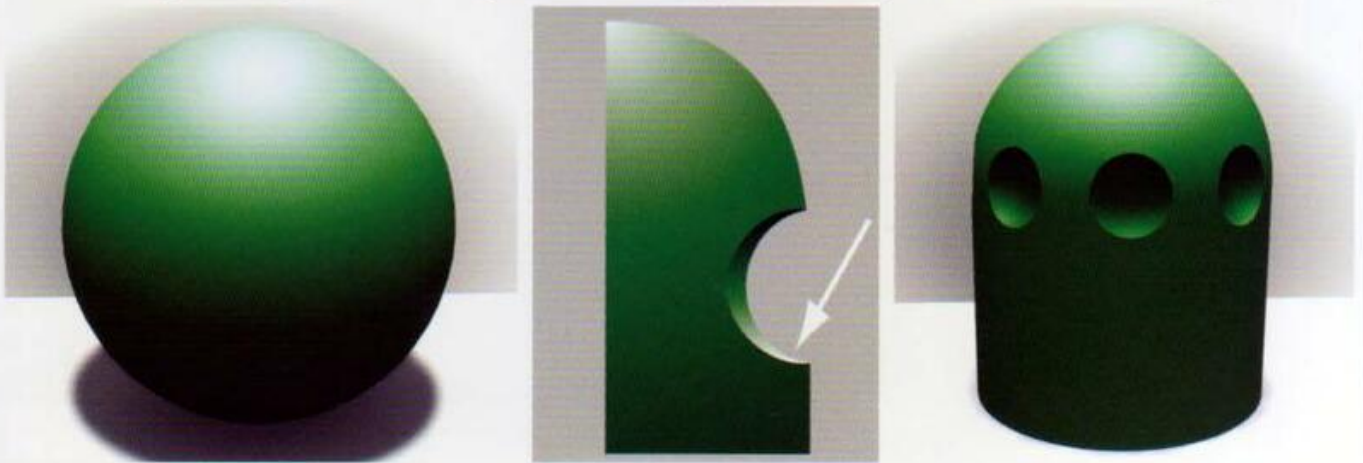
The object's true base colour (not highlighted, nor shaded) occurs on the sides (and the front, and the back surfaces, like the side plane of this page), these zones receive neither shadow nor highlights. Shadows occur where areas are not illuminated by rays of light, i.e. on **the underside of the shape**. The darkest shadows are on the lowest, least exposed face of the flat surface. All the surfaces which have the same angle or slope are of the same brightness.

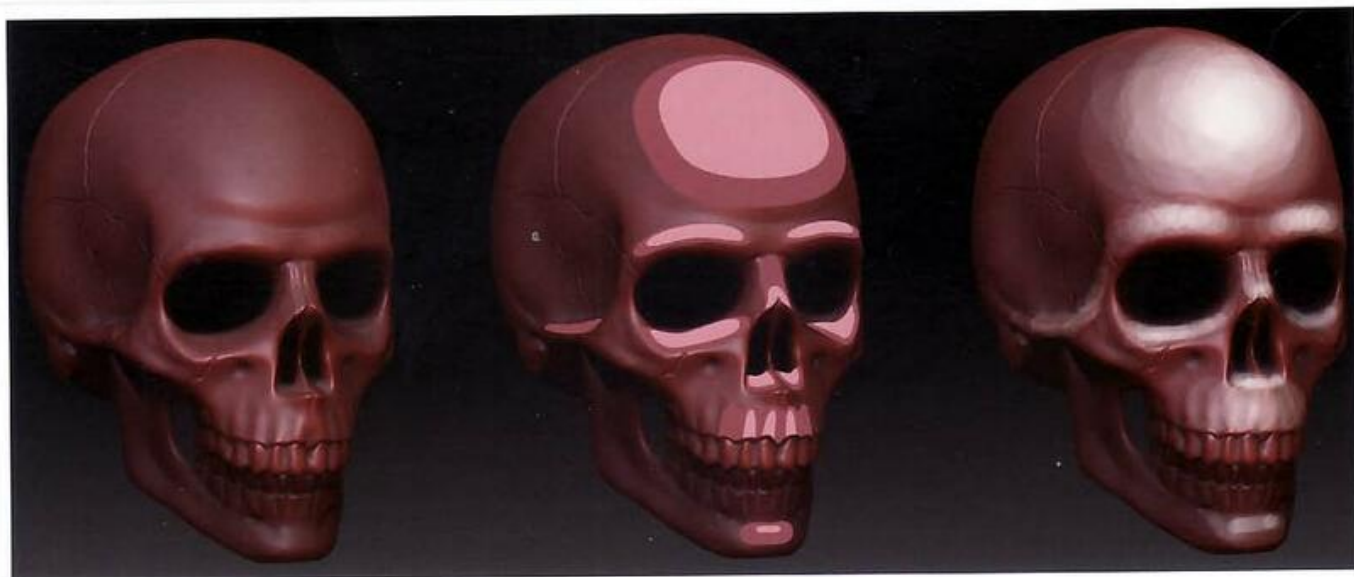
A simple shape with curved surfaces

When the light source is situated over a sphere or over a curved object, the most brightly lit point is situated at the top of the ball, where the subject is perpendicular to the light source. Another golden rule: **There are no flat surfaces on a sphere thus there are no large uniform areas.** Since the sphere is curved, it is subject to a light and colour gradient. Shadows form on the parts where rays of light cannot reach, i.e. below «the equator» of the sphere. The darkest shadows are at the very bottom.

All of the points on the surface which form the same angle with the incoming rays of light receive the same quantity of light. Therefore, all the points forming a horizontal ring around the sphere are of the same colour.

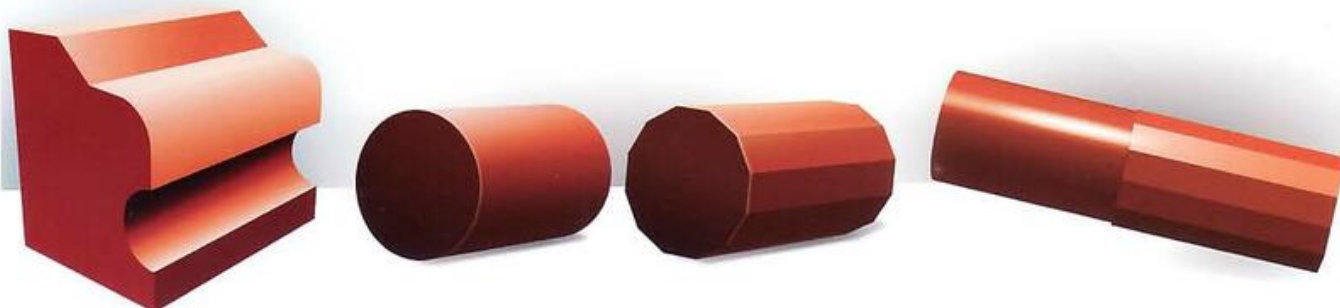
Look at the green shapes in the examples and note the particular way the recesses catch the light.





This skull is a good example of the theory at work. Compare the lighting on the forehead with the brow above the eye sockets; appreciate how the light is stronger as the convex surface faces the light source.

Here are some more examples showing the relationship between light and flat or curved surfaces.



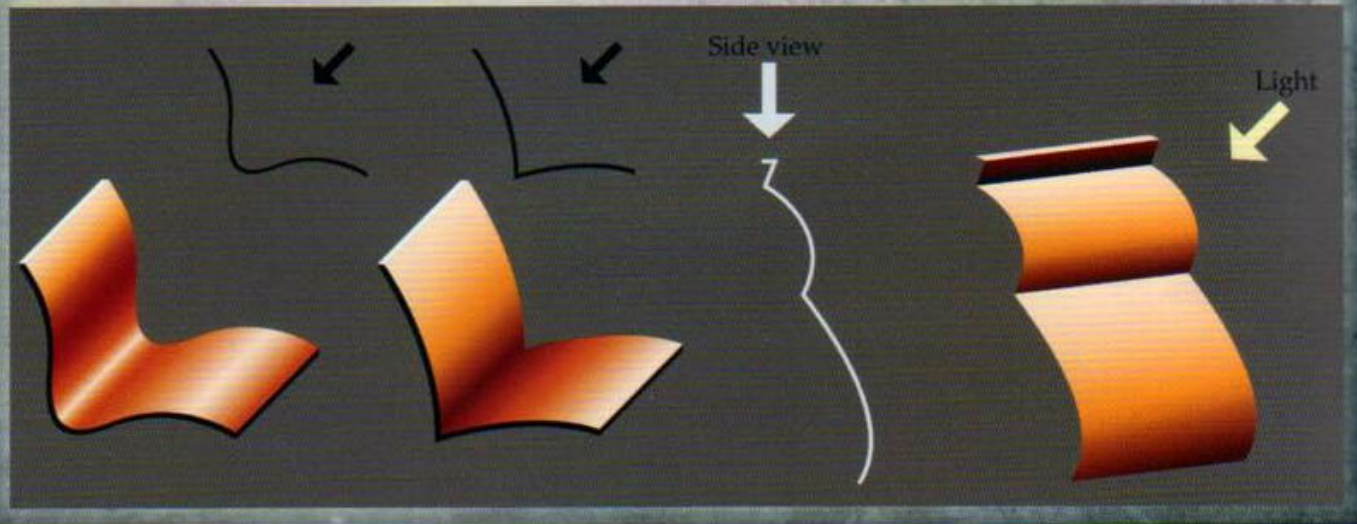
In this example the highlights have been left deliberately exaggerated as large brushstrokes to allow you to identify the most intense light spots.



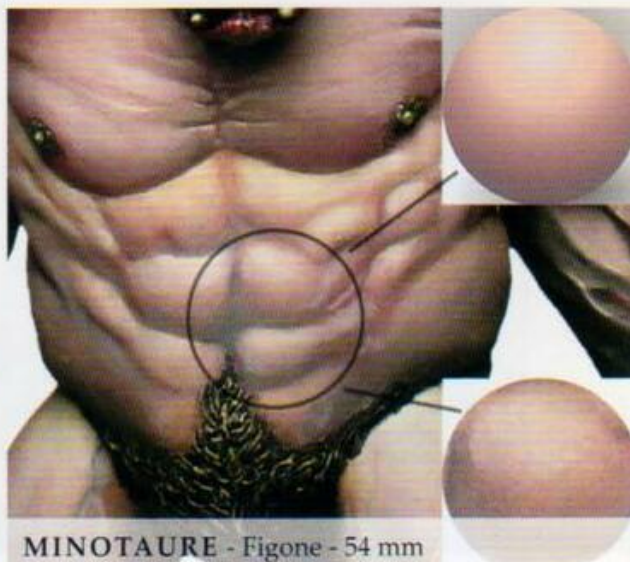
A GOLDEN RULE

The golden rule for accurate zenithal lighting is to remember that at every point on a curve, the more the angle is perpendicular to the where the ray of light strikes, the brighter the point will be.

This rule has different consequences when applied to different shapes. On flat surfaces, the surface is at the same angle as the direction of the rays of light so a flat surface will have a uniform brightness at all points. On a curved surface, the angle where with the rays of light strike varies with the curvature. A curved surface therefore requires a gradient of light and dark: the greater the angle of a surface, the more the gradient between two nearby points will change. Consequently, the greater the curvature of your shape, the sharper the colour gradient must be (i.e. two colours blended into each other over a short distance) and the greater the contrast.



Here is a striking example on the abdominal muscles of this Minotaur. The muscles are represented as spheres and we can see the concentric rings which «round off» the shape of each muscle so they don't appear as cubes composed of flat surfaces.



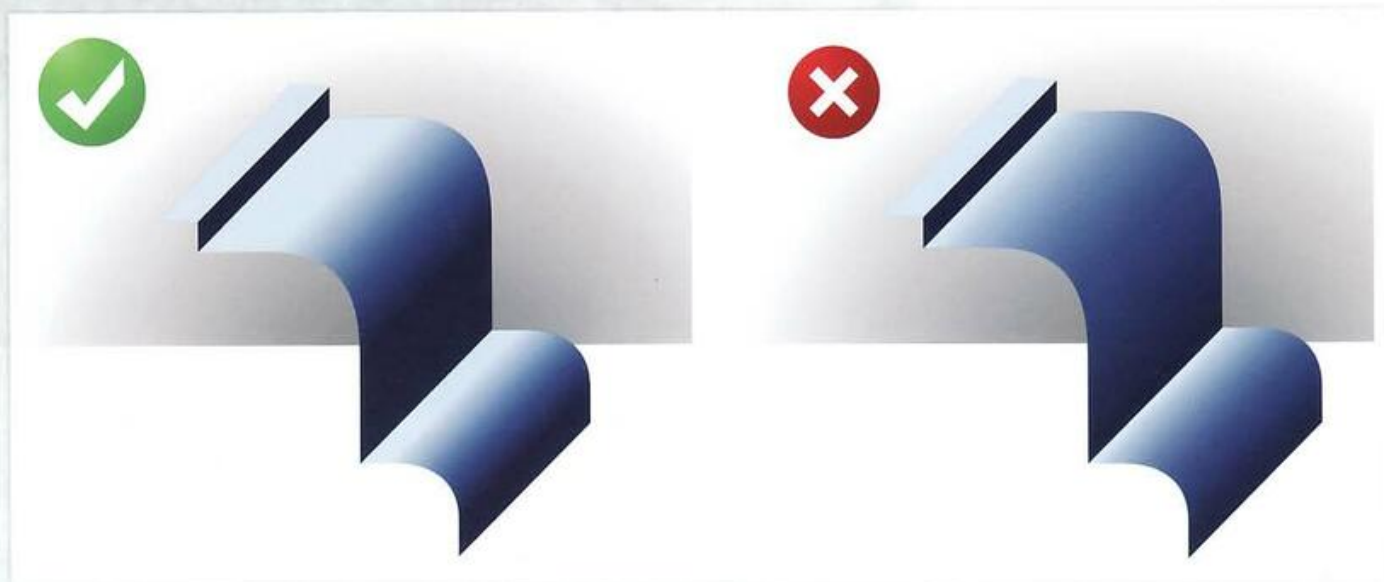
MINOTAURE - Figone - 54 mm



The degree of curvature and the colour gradient

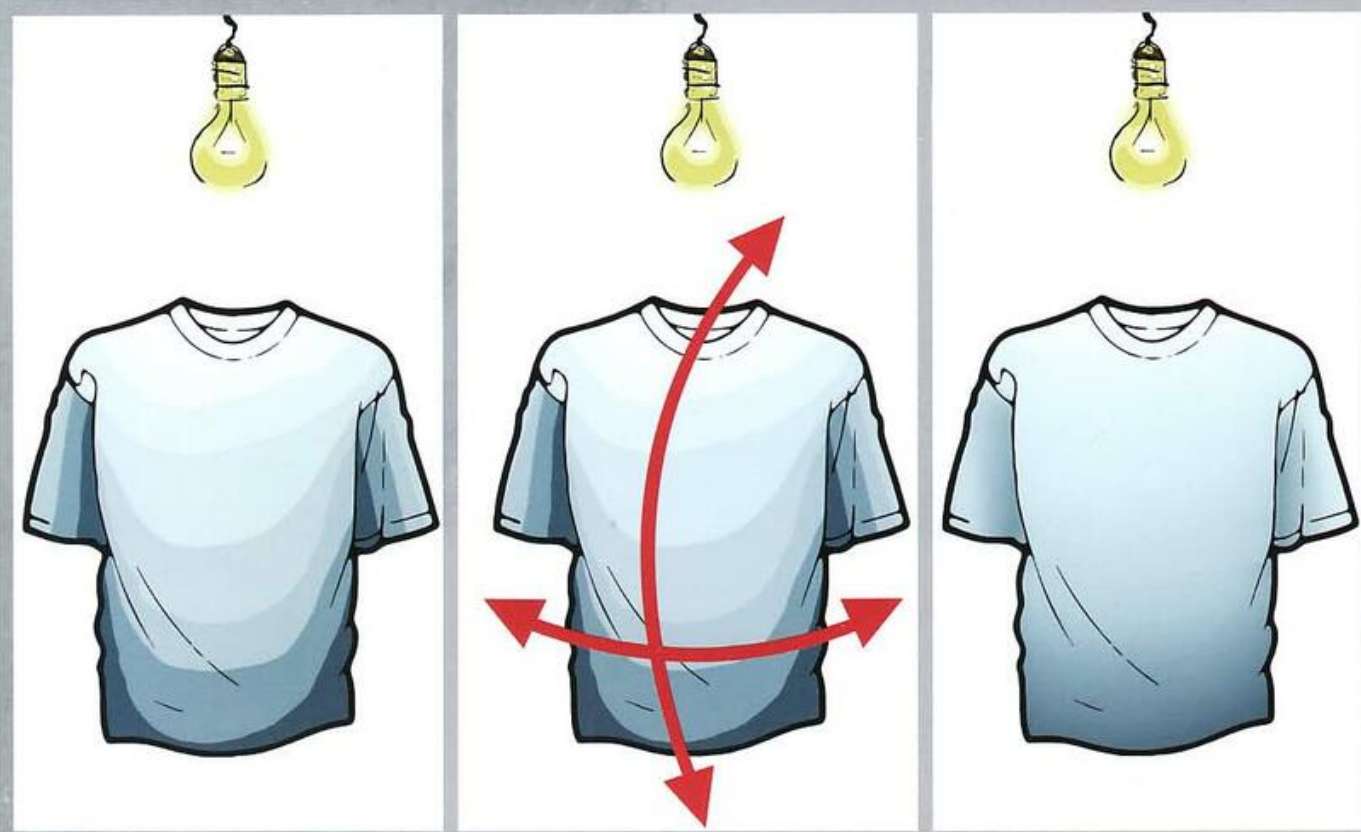
It is important to remember that the sharpness of the colour gradient (how quickly the colours blend) is proportional to the curvature of the part you are painting.

If the element has a gentle curve, the gradient will also be gentle. If the surface includes a sharp angle, the gradient will also be sharper. In all cases, the gradient will match the shape of the curve.



On these pictures of clothing, we can see that the shadows gather more quickly as the cloth «sinks» into the sides.

We can see that the bust contains two curves; one vertical, one horizontal. Logically, the light should follow these two curves.





QUEEN OF DEATH - Figone - 32 mm

The two different ways in which the stomach has been painted in these examples may appear equally appealingly. However, the right-hand version is "better" in terms of lighting. The left-hand version is too blue and too dark, accentuating the stomach in a way in which the sculptor did not intend.

Attention, as well as changing the value (light/dark) the temperature is also changed (warm/cold) since the lighter shade is warmer than the dark one but that is not the subject of this discussion.

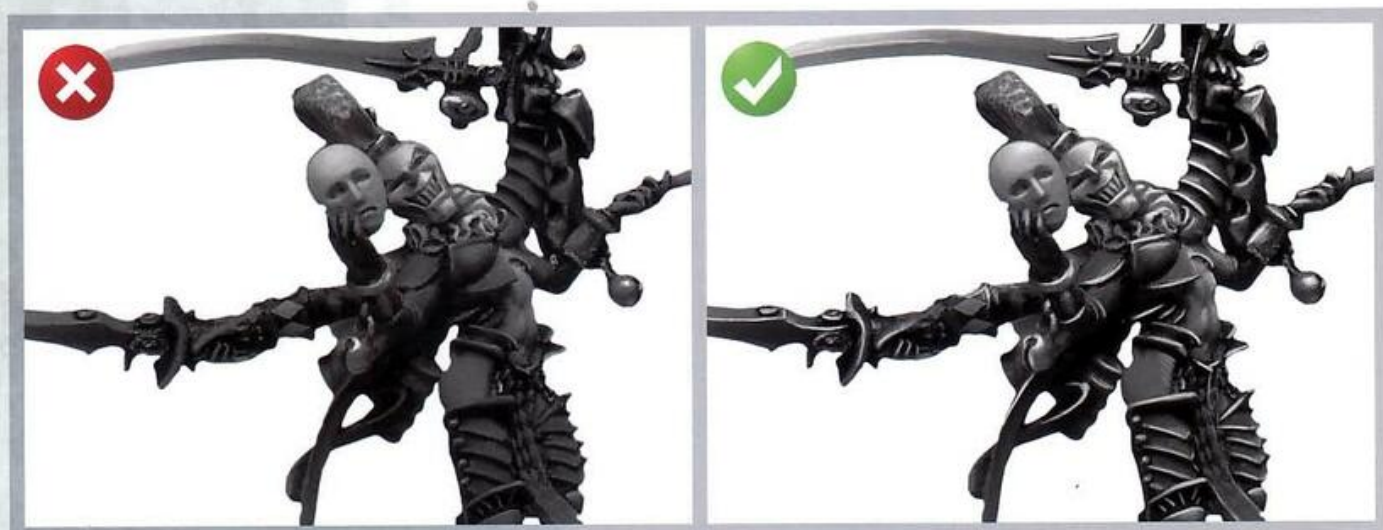
Painting angles, edges and flat surfaces

The message here is simple: don't ignore any noticeable shapes on the object and try to bring them to life with a touch of brightness.

Applying a simple lighting style is the easiest way to suggest three-dimensionality on an otherwise flat silhouette. **A simple line of bright paint around the outline of a raised area will bring out its shape;** the volumes are given form and will stand out more, better defining the object in space.



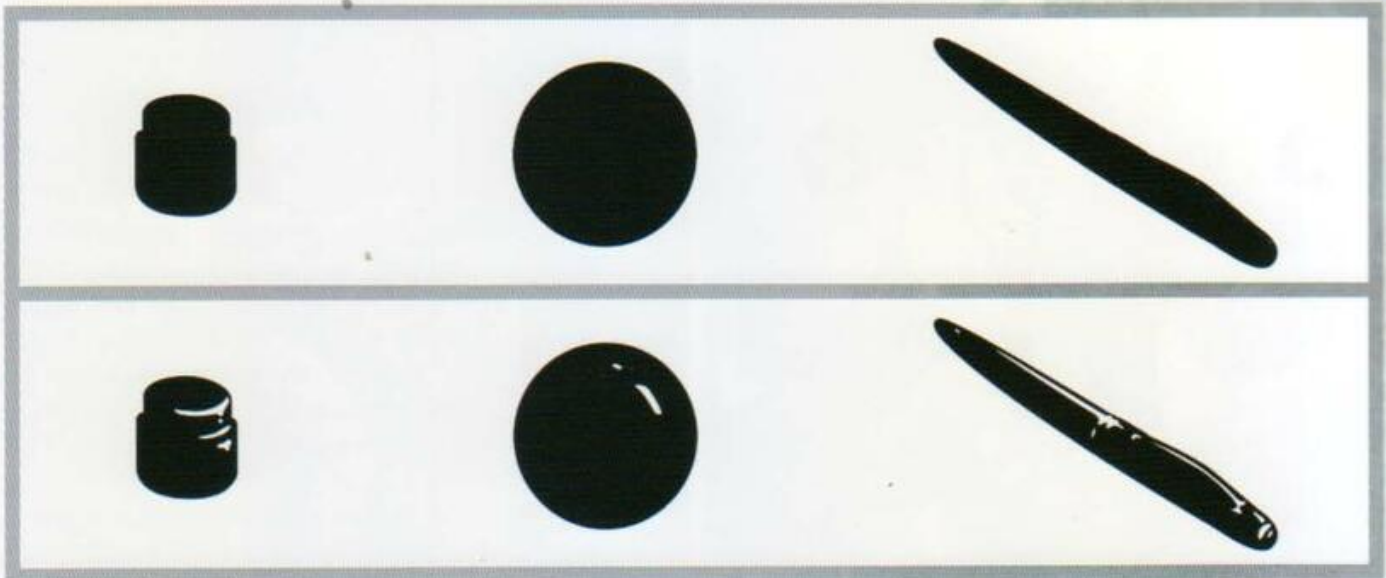
AVALONNIAN - Kraken Edition - 32 mm



To effectively and efficiently create three-dimensionality, it is essential to make logical and explicit painting choices, verging on minimalism. This applies even more so to intricate shapes.

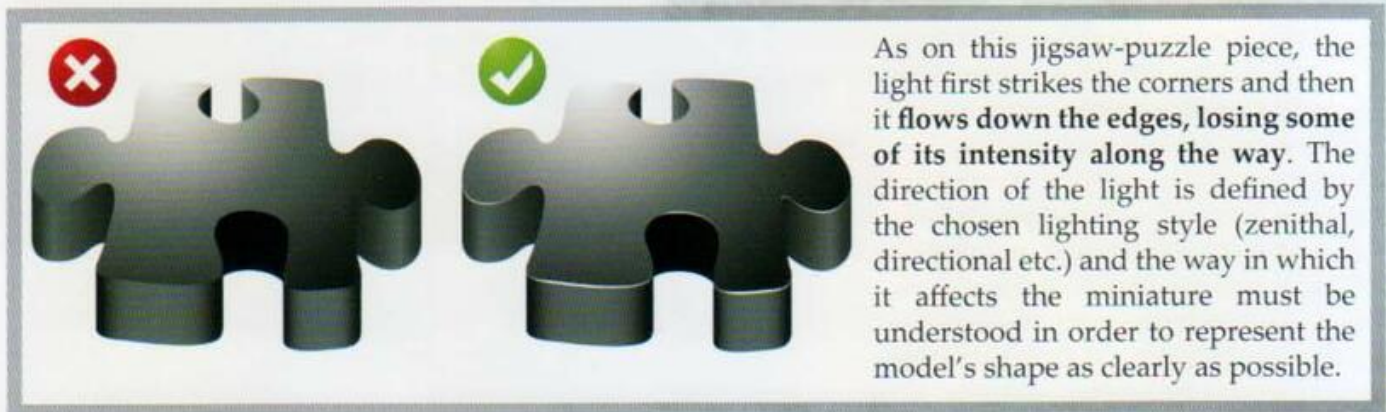


ARLEQUIN - Games Workshop - 32 mm

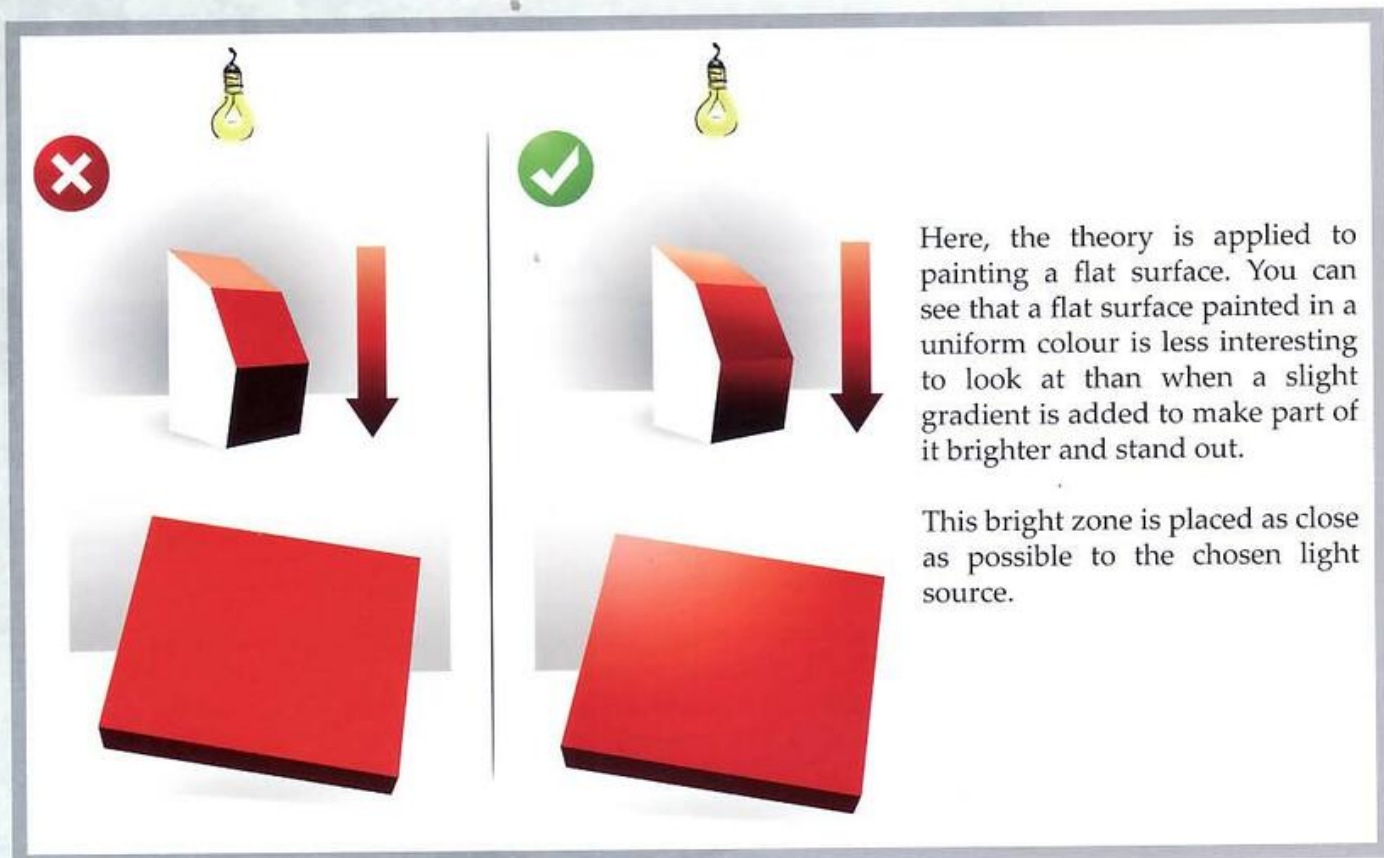


In the figure, the bottle of ink, the ball and the pen are all viewed from different angles but there is nothing shocking about this image. Why is that? Well, it's because the highlighted edge is positioned in such a way that it provides visual cues about the depth and volume of the object, also, because the silhouette of each suggests the presence of a solid, flat surface, i.e. the table on which they are resting.

For each object we chose the best view point - the best angle - to identify the direction which suggests that the sheet of white paper is not just a bright field with black spots on it, but it is a three-dimensional space with objects on it. The points of brightness on the spheres are a powerful visual signal which gives us the illusion of three dimensions. It's the same for the edges of your miniature, so you must define them very carefully.



The maximum highlight shows where the brightest light shines on the object. It reflects the shape of the object so it is not a straight line but widens with the outward curvature of the object and diminishes where the shape curves away from the light.



This mutant's arm shows this theory in practice.



CARLOS - Figone - 32 mm



An organic vision of light and shadow



Embrace the whole model with your eyes; see it all at once for what it is: a large set of different shapes. French neoclassical painter Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres was right when he recommended that his students : «draw the model from far away; be transformed into a giant who dominates everything and sees everything». When you half close your eyes, your image of the miniature becomes blurred and the shapes simplify themselves, this allows you to better perceive the overall characteristics of light and colour on the object. The goal is to help you to see how to build up the areas of highlights and shadows as discrete masses.



This is an important point to understand, the first step is: **simplify the interaction of light and shadow into a question of seeing surfaces**; the surfaces that make up the largest possible shadows, the largest possible highlighted surfaces, as if the miniature was composed of two, or at most three, tones: black, white, and gray.



HAAN - Figone - 54 mm

These masses determine the overall composition of the work. They are **the blocks of shadows and highlights viewed without details**, without taking into account shading or blending, for instance. To be able to put this approach into practice we need to develop the framework of "constructing mass".



FURGOL - Figone - 32mm

In this approach, the word "mass" refers to the highest areas of light and shadow which can be seen on the miniature. **"Constructing mass" means identifying the volumes by simplifying the interaction of light and shadow on the miniature to their most basic forms.** It is important to simplify - mentally at first - the volumes of a miniature into basic geometric forms and to visualise the impact of the light on these forms. We do not usually look at things in this way in everyday life, but it will be worth the effort to develop this ability to improve your painting.

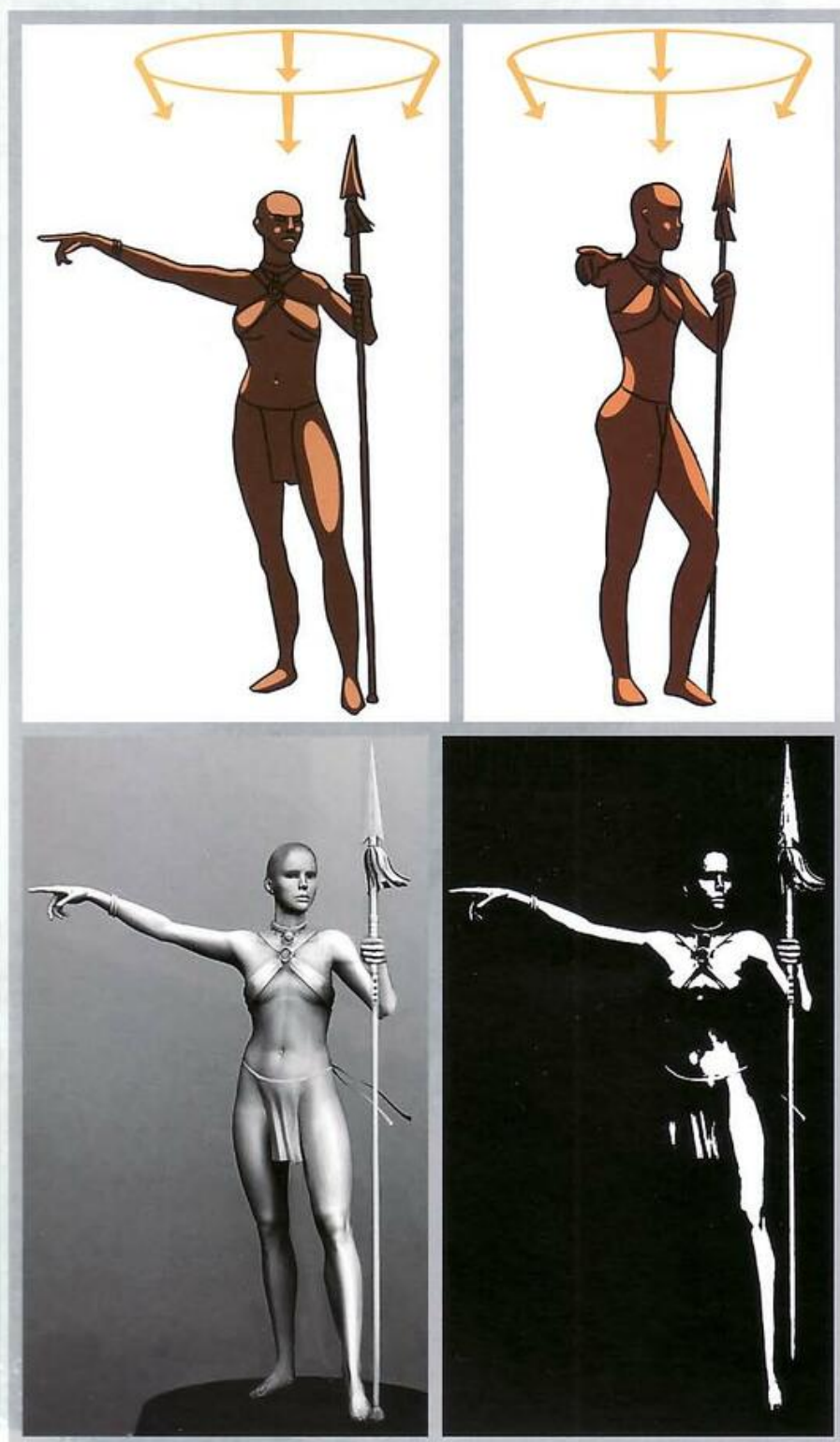


NABILA - Ciné Créatif - 54 mm

I've revised these paragraphs several times, trying to explain the state of mind I am in when I create my miniatures and I realise that these are very subjective, psychological reactions that cannot be fully described in objective language. But I am sure of one thing; everything that makes an artist is summarised in the title of this section: **an organic vision of light and shadow**.

Forget about the small details for the moment and consider the volumes as large, geometric surfaces. Reduce the shape of the head to that of a sphere; envision the arms as tubes, weapons as rectangles and triangles and so on.

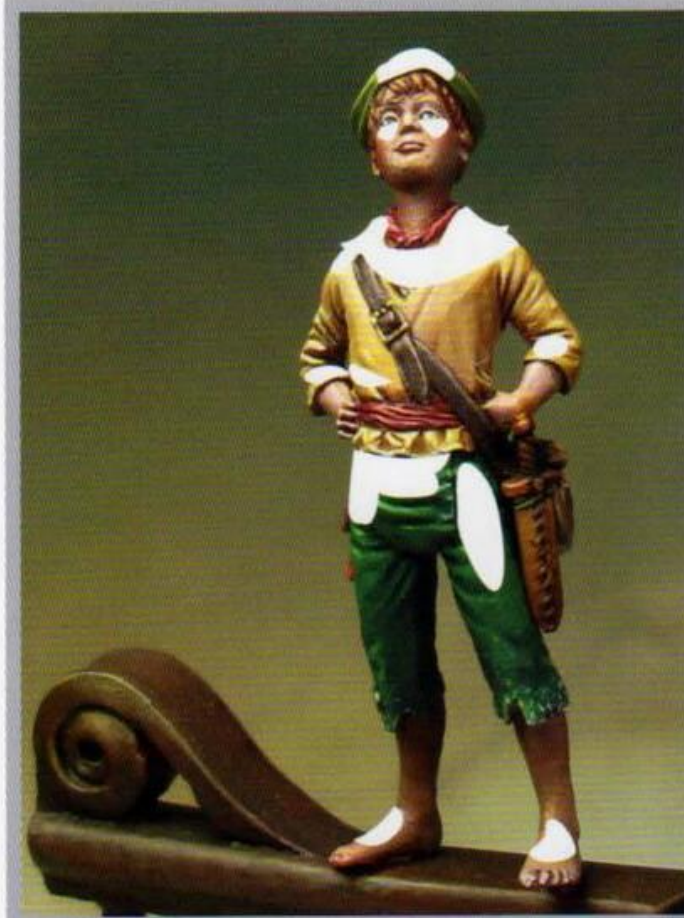
Analysing a few common examples



Next, identify what we can refer to as zones or areas of light. These are large, bright or dark zones arranged according to the shape of the largest volumes and the largest curves of the miniature (the sphere of the head, the curve of the bust, the orientation of the arms and legs).

Unless a miniature has a particularly exotic pose, the brighter surfaces are situated on the forehead, the top of the head, the shoulders, the tops of the arms (depending on how they are positioned), the thighs (if these are exposed to the light), or on the forward leg if the other is set back for balance. The dark surfaces are generally situated under the arms, the chin, the jaw, underneath dresses or other clothing, the crotch, under the thigh if the leg is slightly raised in front of the torso (if the foot is placed on a stone for example), on the back of the legs under the bust. Areas of intermediate brightness are frequently found on the widest parts, with vertical tangents to the light: the stomach (if it's not too bloated), the sides of the torso and the legs, etc.

When a person stands upright, the light mainly brightens the top of the body and draws the viewer's attention to the face and bust. The bottom part of the body is often darker with the forward thigh often being highlighted while a shadow occurs under the rear leg.



PETER PAN - Figone - 54 mm

Zenithal lighting on cloth and small surfaces

There are many factors which influence the shape of a fabric; the material it's made from, its movement, its weight, the shape of the object beneath the fabric or the elements touching it. A variety of folds will form depending on how and in what direction the fabric is pulled. This makes for one of the most interesting aspects of the hobby for painters who like to play with highlights and they are rather simple to achieve once you have understood the following concepts.

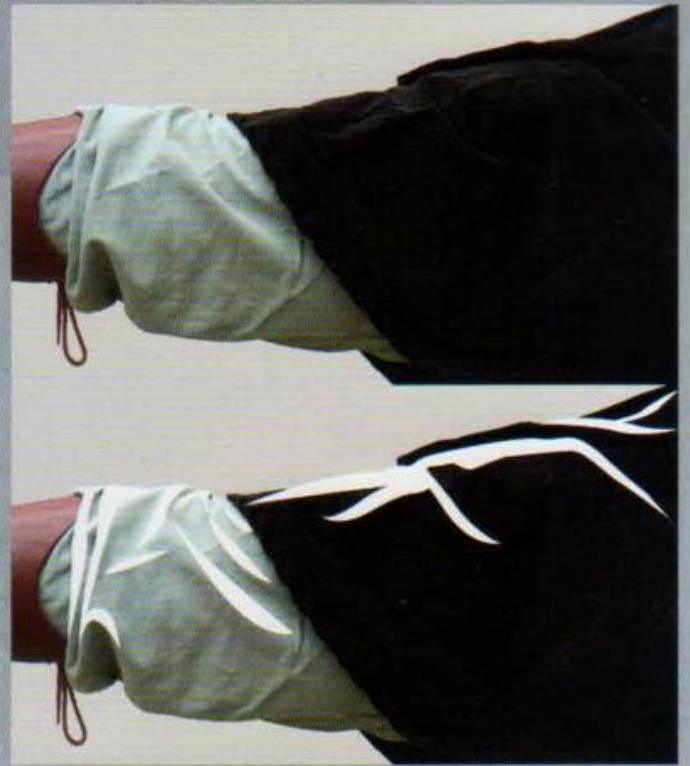


AVALONNIAN - Kraken Edition - 32 mm

Appreciate the tight, the angular, and the slack folds in these examples. Pay special attention to how the light conforms to the shapes to accurately convey the material, the tension, the slackness, etc...



Sharp transitions on horizontal folds



THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER
Figone - 54 mm

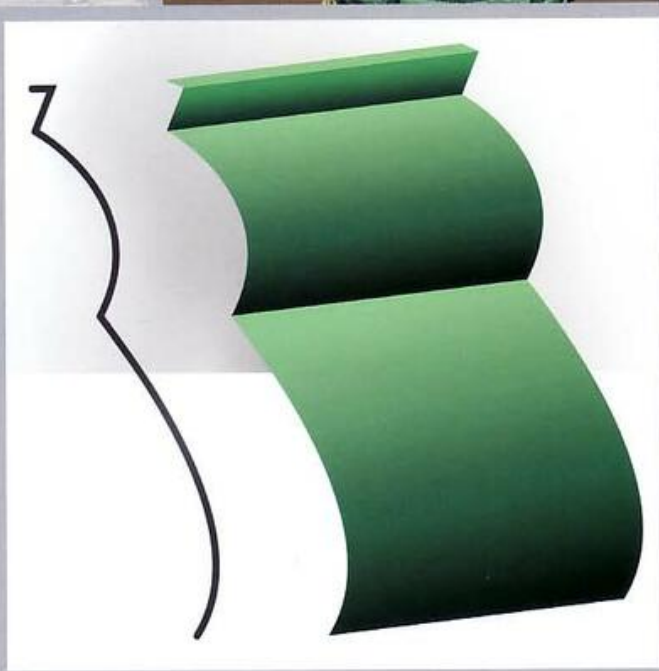


A fold in a garment can be simplified into three zones: a flat zone above, a jagged zone at the fold itself, and a flat zone below. The previous explanation of zenithal light showed how the light settles above the fold, that the colour gradient takes place at an angle and that the shadow is located on the opposite, downward-facing surface. The examples in this section illustrate this.

If the fold in a garment changes angle sharply it is essential that the transition from shadow to light is also sharply delineated.



JOHN KING - Figone - 54 mm



To avoid monotony, a smooth facet will appear on either side of a fold, regardless of it being in shadow or light. They mark themselves by a **brighter highlight** or by a **more intense shadow**. For example, see the grey folds on the left bicep or on the shoulder bag of this Crimean War foot soldier.





CRIMEAN WAR SOLDIER - Latorre Models - 54 mm

Sharp transitions on diagonal folds



NATHALIEL - Figone - 32 mm



Take for example the folds in this wide skirt which start almost vertically and as they fall, they bend outwards to capture more light. **Zenithal light** is “caught” or most intense where the surface is most perpendicular to the rays of light.



Notice how the light plunges into the shadows on one side of Rocco's tail and into the light on the other.



ROCCO - Figone - 54 mm



SOLDIER FROM THE CRIMEAN WAR - Latorre Models - 54 mm

We can see clearly in the first photo how the «natural» light (located at the zenith for the sake of the photo) settles on the reliefs of the folds of the sack. The painted gradient should enhance and accentuate this lighting effect.



Here is a different example which underlines three fundamental points:

- The light settles on the facet «above» the folds.
- The highlights are as bright as the zone facing the light.
- The width of highlights vary according to the thickness of the sculpted relief.



THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER - Figue - 54 mm

Progressive transition of vertical folds



CAELINA - Kraken Edition - 32 mm



GALADRIEL - Games Workshop - 32 mm

This lighting style is close to general lighting which consists of darkening the recesses and brightening the raised parts of the model without taking into account any specific direction of the light source.

So we just have to shade the creases and highlight the bits that stick out.

Obviously, the light "hits" where the fabric sticks up, as can be seen at the bottom of the skirts in these examples.

Appreciate the subtlety on this red cape, where the big fold to the left is not completely vertical, we see that the light settles delicately on the edge of the fold, on the side facing the zenithal point.

BRINGING OUT THE FORM OF SMALL VOLUMES

Small volumes react to light in much the same way as large volumes, but since they are smaller, there is less space in which to paint the gradient. I therefore paint them with just **small touches of colour**. I generally begin with dark tones and I brighten up with touches of brighter and brighter paint to add most of the brightness wherever the most light would strike. Here are some examples.



ROCCO - Figone - 54 mm



CRIMEAN WAR SOLDIER
Latorre Models - 54 mm



VERUS - Figone - 54 mm

How does a secondary source affect brightness?

The positioning of the highlights and shadows due to a secondary light source is treated the same way as zenithal light, except that the secondary light source should be viewed more as a spotlight directed at a specific part of the miniature than as an overhead, ambient illumination. A surface will receive more or less light from the secondary source according to its orientation and its position regarding source. Specifics for reproducing these effects in the context of zenithal lighting are discussed in the next section, but the principles can be applied to all kinds of light sources.



HELMUTT - Figone - 32 mm

LIGHTING EFFECTS: COMPOSITION AND NARRATIVE

The role of bright tones and shadows



You should never forget that the representation of light also contains the representation of shadow. It might seem obvious to say so, but sometimes the obvious can be overlooked. **A spot of bright light only appears to be bright when contrasted by a spot of shadow.** Unfortunately, light is fickle and things are not as simple as that. Most of us have some difficulty seeing the tonal values in colours. The study of black and white photography can be helpful to show us the distribution of the light and shadow on familiar objects.

We can say that the bright parts of a miniature emerge when they are surrounded by dark zones (while the opposite is less true). As far as possible, paint your brightest, most important element so that it can be seen as clearly as possible by the viewer, like a lighthouse at night, or a candle in a cave. **Learn how to catch the eye with the interplay of exaggerated contrast;** certain parts can be made to emerge more gradually, while others can remain in the shadows.

Mastering composition with light

Compare the two Minotaurs to understand what to do and what not to do.

Stark contrasts are a great way to emphasize different elements of a miniature.

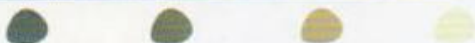


MINOTAURE - Figone - 54 mm



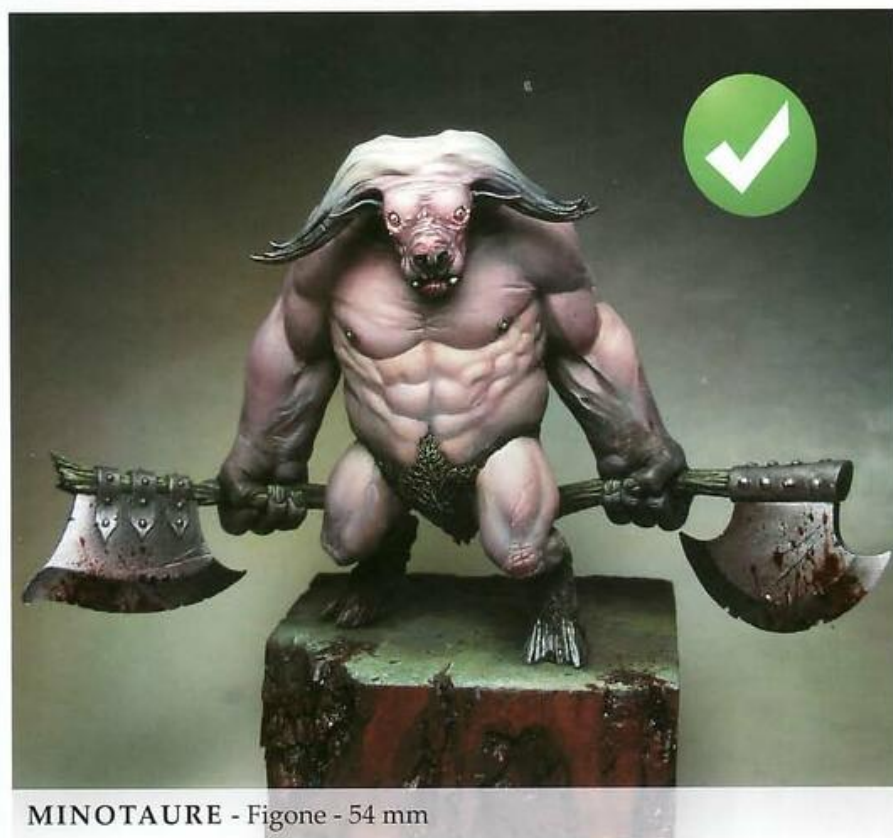
There are various ways to create strong contrasts. Sometimes choosing a pair of complementary colours can produce the effect we're after; sometimes a monochromatic approach or a monochromatic feeling is the key. Another way to achieve this effect is to use a contrast of light and dark colours. As you will see, the overall combination of colours produces a striking effect.

Given the small size of our chosen medium, it is advisable to exaggerate the contrast, almost forcing it, to maintain a paintjob that is easily understood at that scale. Light is born from shadows so I tend to create contrast on my miniatures to enhance their drama and clarity.



JADE SPEAR WOMEN- Kraken Edition - 32 mm

Creating drama by exaggerating contrast



MINOTAURE - Figone - 54 mm



Strong lighting which increases contrasts (the effect of a sunset for example) can create a more dramatic subject. It can also help to focus the viewer on a specific part of the figurine. It is highly recommended not to aggressively brighten all the prominent parts of a figurine, at the risk of seeing it transformed into a Christmas tree hung with bright, colourful lights.

LIGHT TONES

A very bright painting which contains a lot of white can be said to be done in a "light tone". Using colours like this produces a creation which is bright and airy; and the changes in value are very subtle. When you use this kind of pallet, carefully plan your colour mixtures and be careful not to add too much grey! The idea is to use just enough grey to control the colour. Too much grey will de-saturate the colours and dull the painting.

DARK TONES

Using dark colours and adding black to the theme creates an atmosphere that we refer as a "dark tone". The dark values of blues and black help emphasize the bright zones but black must be used carefully or the overall painting may be too gloomy. Always try to keep your colour mixtures vibrant.

In a universe where shadows dominate, there is a feeling of melancholy, subterfuge, detachment.

Shapes seem flattened, featureless, dark, and timeless

Focal points: How to get the attention you deserve ?

We often see miniatures which are painted to a very high technical level but which nevertheless do little to attract the viewer's attention. In spite of perfectly mastered blending and a well chosen colour scheme, these miniatures can seem flat and monotonous because something is missing; something extra is needed to grab our attention and give the subject its «soul»: the focal point.

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY FOCUS?

Every well-sculpted miniature contains one or more element which dominates the overall feel of the miniature. Often it's the face, a particular expression, an original pose, or perhaps a fascinating object it holds in its hand. The concept of a focal point, as the name implies, is to draw the attention of the viewer to a specific point so that they are "focused" on the precise area which the painter wants to emphasize.

The focal point is often used by advertising executives to direct the consumer to their core message. This is perfectly illustrated in the case of the promotional poster: while the features they want to highlight (the price of the product, its name, its brand) are often written in large print, with warm colours to draw the attention, the other information (particular terms of sale, limited stocks) are written in small simple text and placed in the corner.

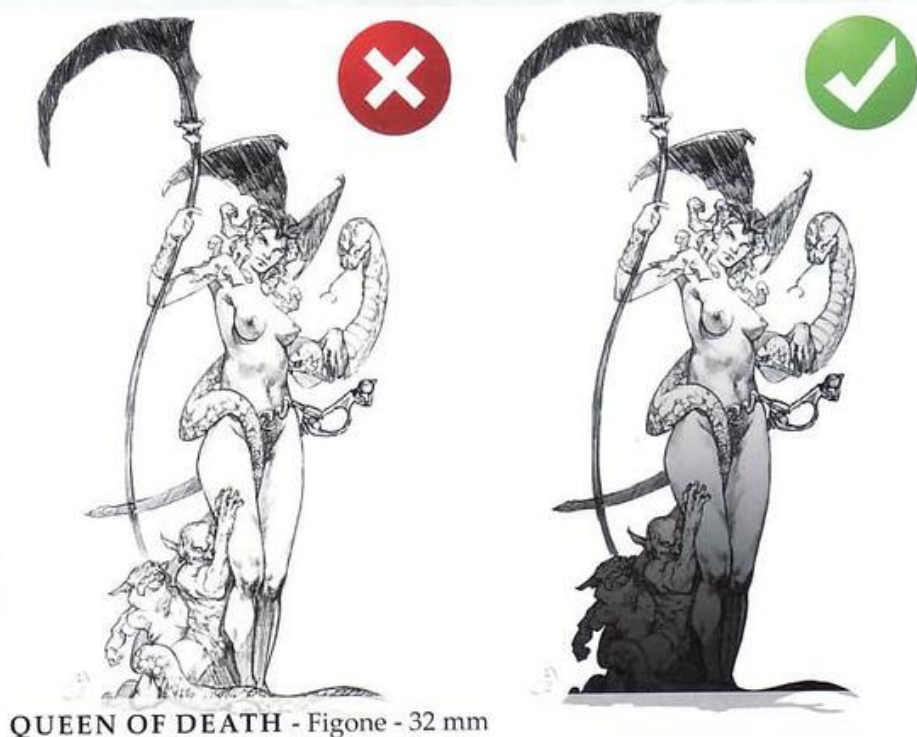


CARLOS - Figone - 32 mm

It is more or less the same principle when you paint your miniatures: you have to ask yourself how to play with the colours - characteristics of brightness, tint, and saturation - to best emphasize your subject. Whatever your level of painting, the concept of the focal point is very useful. For a novice painter (or a more advanced painter looking to paint quickly) one part of the miniature (usually the face) painted with a bit more effort can draw favourable attention and leave the other parts in the background so they can be painted more quickly and with less attention to detail.

For the experienced painter, mastering focal points **strengthens the atmosphere of the miniature, improves the narrative, and directs attention to the details he wants to highlight.**

The silhouette: form in space



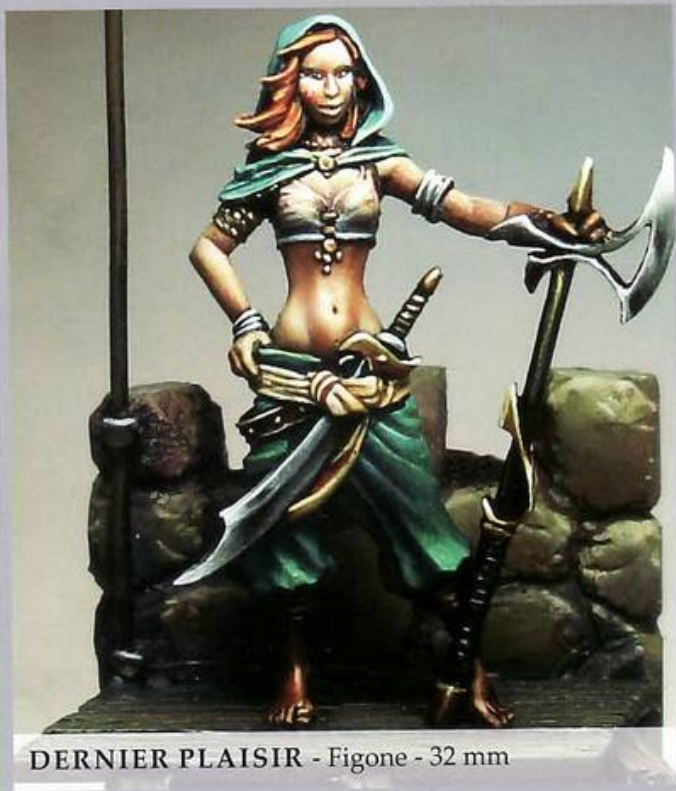
QUEEN OF DEATH - Figone - 32 mm

The limits of the shadows on a miniature or on a drawing can often provide an excellent picture frame for the composition. On models where the contrast between light and shadow is very stark, these limits transform into basic elements of an outline and can add to the readability of the figurine.

Using dark colours, you can establish the silhouettes of the masses of the objects in two dimensions - height and width - but they will seem flat if we stop there. When you add the brighter areas and highlights, you create texture and depth while adding shape;

giving the illusion of three dimensions. When defining the silhouette, placing the highlights clearly and sensibly are the keys to success. The outline created by the shadows allows the volume to be seen more clearly and as we understand the model better we can visually build the figure the way we would like.

How to choose the zones which deserve particular



DERNIER PLAISIR - Figone - 32 mm

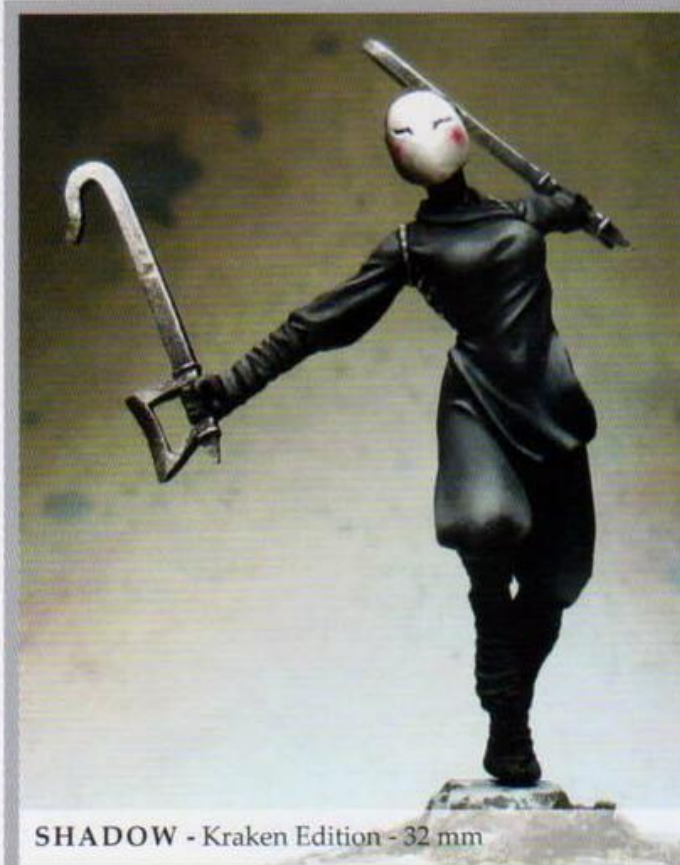


GAME OF LIFE - Métal Models
Conversion by Jérémie Bonamant Teboul - 54 mm

Before you start choosing the colours for your miniature, you need to select which elements are visually important to you. If you create the same effect everywhere, the eye cannot identify the significant parts, and the elements intended to enhance the details will not stand out: moderation is necessary. To choose which zones to emphasize, you can put yourselves in the mind of a caricaturist: to express the subject's character they simplify the portrayal to a few essential details and then exaggerate their shape or their size when drawing them.

Most of the time your choice will include the face and the miniature's eyes, but you can also choose to concentrate on a magic object, a gemstone, a shield, a weapon, etc.

It is tempting to want to highlight all of the small details, even if they are not really that important. Even if it might produce a good local effect, it's better to paint them in a more neutral way and avoid damaging the overall aspect of the miniature. If **everything is painted to stand out, nothing will stand out.**



SHADOW - Kraken Edition - 32 mm

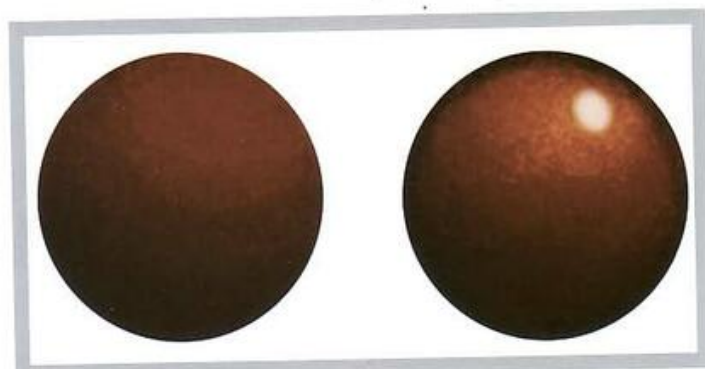




ARLEQUIN - Games Workshop
Conversion by Jérémie Bonamant Teboul - 32 mm

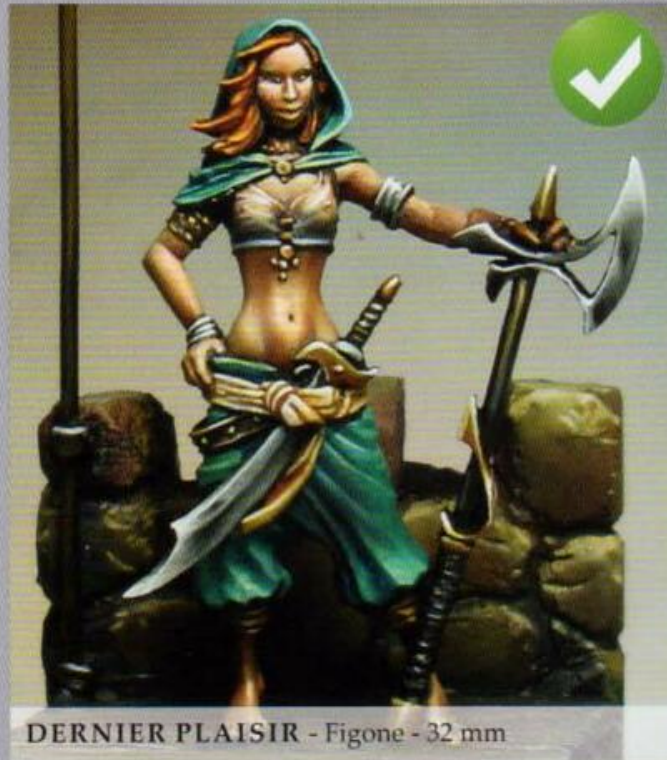
Highlights, the indispensable touch

This section is directly related to the section that dealt with painting angles and edges. We saw that the silhouette is the first thing that we perceive since it outlines a shape in space. The simplest way to give to a shape the third dimension is with a **small area of highlight**. In fact, every shape receives a maximum amount of light on its **most convex part**, which then diminishes little by little from the light source until it **slides into twilight at the extremities**.

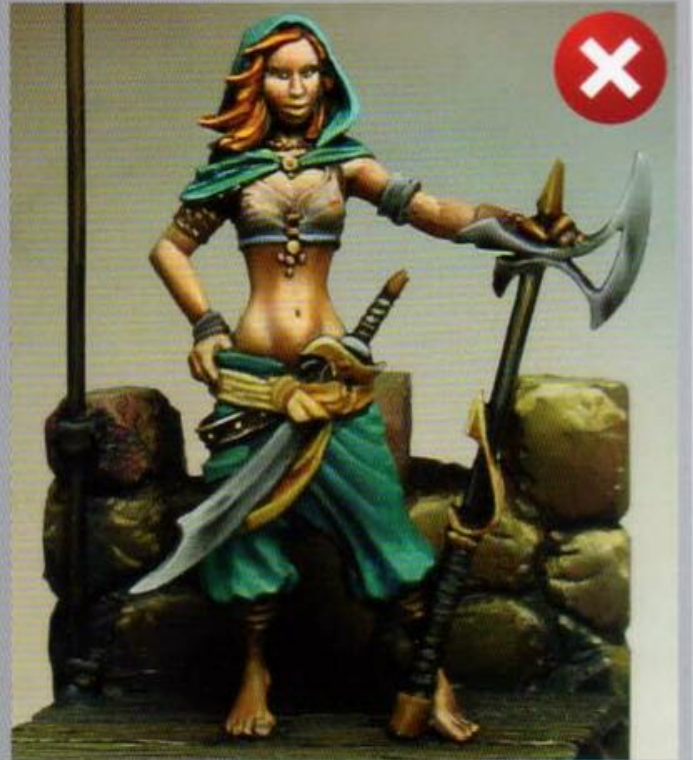


Although it is perhaps the smallest highlight you can paint, the final highlight or light spot (sometimes called the centre light in design) is going to specify the projection of the shape towards the exterior, **to make it pop out of the plane of the silhouette and approach the observer**. Added to the silhouette, which defines the outline of the shape, the highlight brings out the third dimension and gives the illusion that the raised parts of the miniature are standing out.

The final highlights on each element add an essential precision to the shape of objects, in a way which a silhouette or a simple blended gradient cannot. We are using the same tricks as the draftsman who plays with bright touches to define a concave or convex curve on a silhouette. When the volume is illustrated in the simplest way - **a minimal highlight on the spot of maximum curvature** - there is nothing more to say.



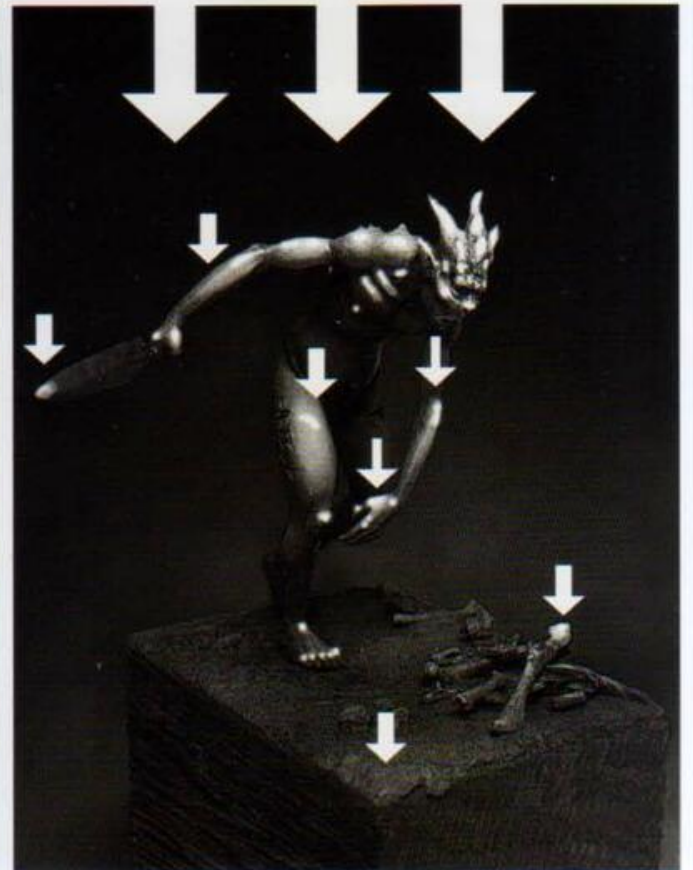
DERNIER PLAISIR - Figone - 32 mm



Look carefully at both versions of this miniature; one of them has been deprived of these essential highlights. On the normal version, we can distinguish little spots of light on the face (cheekbones, nose, and upper lip), on the metallic elements, as well as on some of the joints of the hands. Each fold of the belt and each decoration on the arm show the tension of its position, and the point of the lance and the feathers of the helmet also receive their own highlights. These spots of light serve to emphasize certain shapes which are essential to the understanding of the overall character of the figure.



FURGOL - Figone - 32 mm



How and Why to position the light spots?

A light spot can create a focal point on the smaller elements of the model. By varying the intensity of your blending and the opacity of your paint you can enhance the miniature's volumes but it is the final highlights that set it off. Light spots are often used in 2D illustration to give the illusion of 3D volumes.

In the same way that a very tight blended gradient in which we place a simple white point in the centre transforms a flat circle into a sphere, when applied to miniature, volumes can be highlighted with little bright spots.

An edge highlighted with a very bright colour or an intense but diffuse highlight on a convex volume makes the details pop out significantly.

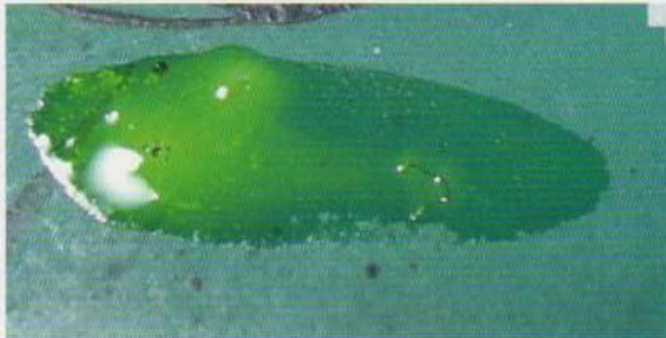


ROCCO - Figone - 54 mm



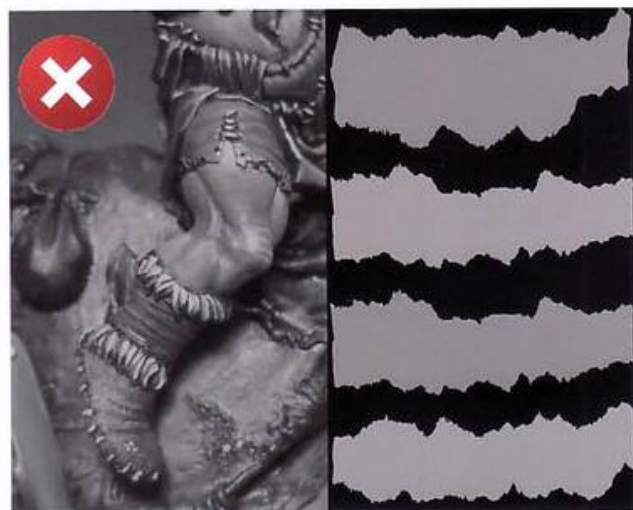
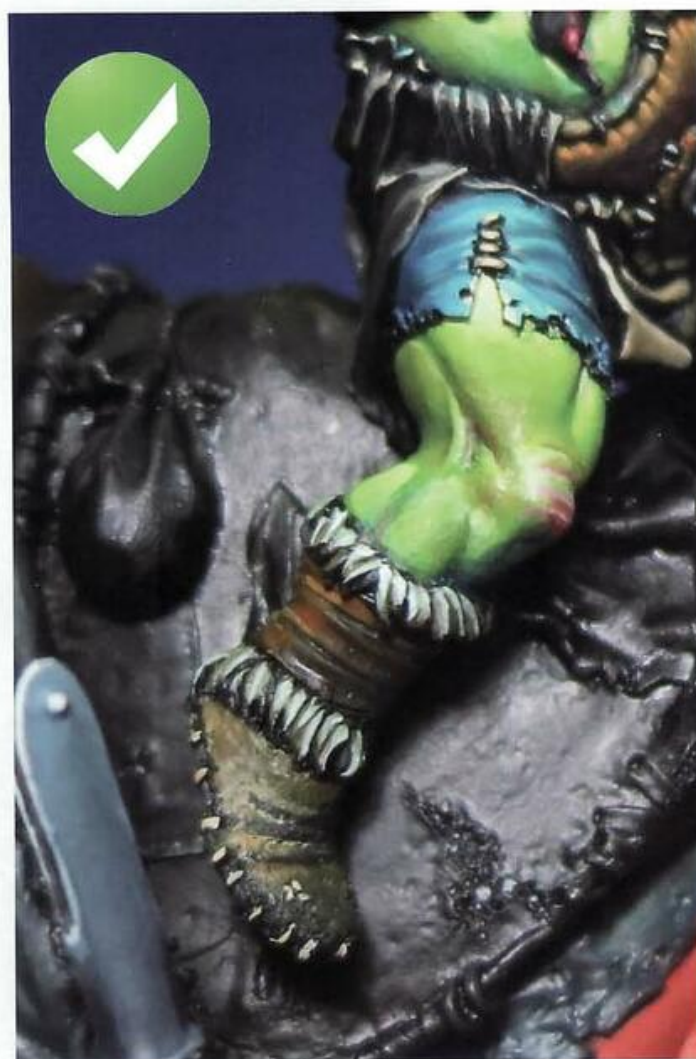
TRICKS

There are several ways to obtain a spot of light. A simple gradient obtained by successive washings is well suited for large area, but less appropriate when we are dealing with micro-points of light. Other techniques also allow an interesting gradient to be achieved along with sufficient brightness to catch the eye. A simple method is to work with diluted paint and to use the natural distribution of the paint up the brush hairs. When we add a little paint to the point of a wet brush, the paint pigments are going to spread up the length of the hairs in a diffuse way via capillary action. This means that the tip will be heavily loaded with pigments, whereas up the rest of its length, the hairs will be progressively less and less loaded with pigment. So, by painting with the edge of the brush, we deposit more concentrated paint (thus an opaque and intense layer) at the tip and a more and more transparent quantity of pigments along the edge, creating a natural gradient of luminosity.



ROCCO - Figone - 54 mm

Alternating light and dark areas



The best example if this explanation is illustrated through these few diagrams and images of models. Another obvious example is the design of popular sport footwear...

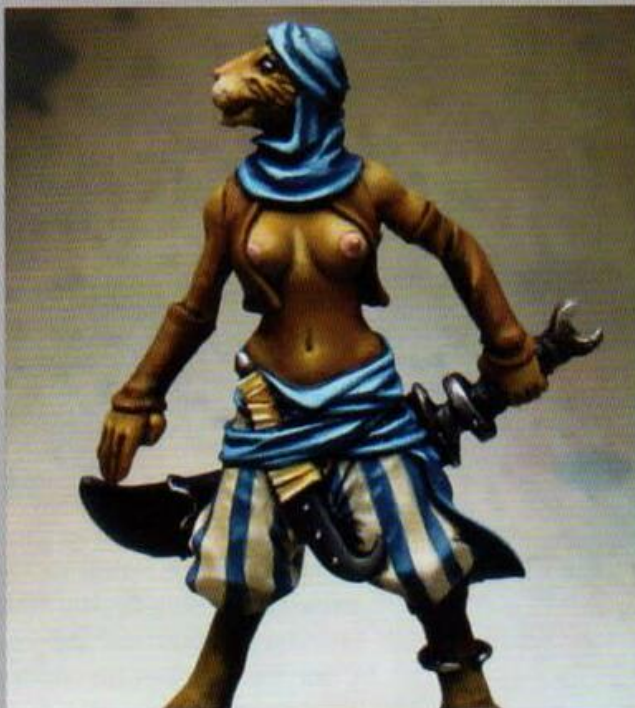


KHALIMAN - Kraken Edition - 32 mm

I decided that the main element of this miniature, namely the skin, would be a light colour. I always try to have a dark element next to a light coloured element so I decided to paint the parts which «frame» the skin in dark colours. The skin is light, so the fabrics will be dark. We could have made the opposite choice, as it is the case with the black-skinned Jaraya in a later example.

To balance this miniature I wanted the pants to be light. I chose beige because it goes with everything, with brown stripes to harmonise with the skin. The outline of the mouth is bright to draw attention to the face, enhanced by the reddish nose. To remain discreet the armbands are of a medium tint.

I had no preconceived idea about the painting of the details on this miniature. I think it's better not to, just let things take their course and then tidy it up later. Small details should always be considered secondary to the main elements and they should be painted (or repainted) to conform to the overall theme as it develops.



KHALIMAN - Kraken Edition - 32 mm

In this example, the skin tone is medium. We thus enhance the contrast using different tints (the cool blue of the belt contrasts with the warm brown of the skin).



KHALIMAN - Kraken Edition - 32 mm

How to control the mid tones ?



VERUS - Figone - 54 mm

So far, we've learnt how to look at certain details of a miniature and to observe how all the elements can be grouped into one composition by comparing their forms and their colours. We've learnt to see where light is coming from, how to locate the large zones of shadow, and note where the brightest points are. **The next stage consists of establishing the order of the various intermediary tones from lightest to darkest.**

Indeed, to realistically render the volumes of a miniature, reproducing light gradients is not enough, it is also necessary to play with different tones i.e. to place the various elements of the composition along the light-dark continuum.

In this section we will analyse several techniques which can be used to represent lighting effects. A properly blended colour gradient helps define an object's shape by providing realistic shading. Using colours with different tonal values can add further realism by increasing the impression of depth. **Each tone corresponds to a different level of exposure to the light source:** zones with similar exposure will have similar tonal values and areas with different levels of exposure can be demarcated by using different tones: lighter or darker depending on their position.

This section is incredibly **IMPORTANT**. Compare the two photos of Rocco: the «wrong» one (with the red cross) was retouched on the computer to remove the visual effect which I added to enhance the luminosity of the front of the miniature while voluntarily pulling the rear into semi-darkness.



ROCCO - Figone - 54 mm



The darkest colours, serve to limit the extent of the overall shape of the miniature when applied correctly. It is therefore essential to respect the outlines and use the strongest shadows only for these outlines.

The intermediate zones establish the more or less strongly shaded zones, and help delineate the forms.

With every intermediate shadow zone you obtain more and more defined volumes, up to the biggest zones of light which eventually define the model's shape.

So you see that each step plays a role - too strong a shadow in one place or a missing highlight in another interferes with the viewer's understanding of the whole. You need to know how to effectively evaluate and grade the shadows from lightest to darkest and the highlights from brightest to least bright.



MINOTAURE - Figone - 54 mm



Now that I have globally shaded the largest volumes, **I am going to refine the paintwork with darkened nuances** to take into account the «secondary» volumes (abdominal muscles, ribs). This time I will use a slightly brighter colour, as well as applying the darkest shadow to the outline of the belt, the shadows of the fingers, the armpits, and the border between the hairline and the neck.

I've also added some highlights in the places where the light falls on protruding elements. I began by brightening the shaded areas; that is to say, even within overall dark areas there are small volumes which deserve a brighter tint, for example, the ribs. I'm not going to paint them with an objectively bright colour, just with the base colour since it is relatively brighter than the colour I used to shade but still darker than the highlighted areas.

Thanks to the varying degrees of brushwork, different zones of shadow will begin to take form on the finished work providing the impression of volume. You will need to know how to subtly differentiate between different zones since they don't all have the same intensity of light or the same depth of shade.



The first shadows are added from a **global perspective**. For the moment I'm ignoring the smaller elements (abdominal muscles, small muscles etc.) while I concentrate on defining the volumes of my miniature in their global form (masses). So, the lower abdomen is generally more darkened than the top of the trunk, the tops of arms are brighter than the bottom, the sides are darker than the front, the neck is generally darker than the face, and so on.

MINOTAURE - Figone - 54 mm

THE HARMONY TRIANGLE



QUI LEE QIN - Figone - 32 mm



THE FLUTE PIPER - Games Workshop
Conversion by Jérémie Bonamant Teboul - 54 mm



Creating various focal points allows us to simultaneously emphasize certain elements of the miniature and also to help the viewer's attention to flow from one point to the next, according to the direction which the eye naturally follows. This can make the composition more cohesive and add depth, **so I artificially create diagonal lines to guide the eye and suggest movement in the composition.** In the same way, advertising executives organise the elements of their posters to highlight a logo, a brand, or an important element of the product they wish to sell.

Knowing how to take a step back



THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER - Figone - 54 mm



There are times when it's necessary to take a step back and look at the miniature from a distance. An image has to be contrasted enough and effective so that it is **understandable and readable** from a metre away, then two. The closer we get to it, the more we enter the depicted universe and the more we start to discover new things; a background, an environment, and other interesting details. That is to say, at a distance we seize the heart of the image and the eye is attracted, interested to learn more, then the closer we get to it the more we understand it and begin to spot those elements that complement the main subject and enrich the narrative.



Computers are ideal for certain tasks, especially when we want modify the vision we have of our miniature. Submit it to the **upside down test**, as draftsmen frequently do. With an inverted photo, our eye has a different, totally abstracted perception of it. Our eye does not linger any more over the story, it is not captivated any more by the sense of the model but by its colours, the various elements, the obvious elements and those more discreet ones, the balances and the imbalance, the movement etc. It's a good way to verify if we have achieved what we wanted. Sometimes it happens that a diorama works better when it's turned upside down – tough luck if that ever happens to you!

I always convert my photos to **black and white** towards the end of a project. It's another way to immediately discern if a miniature is readable or not; contrasted enough and balanced, if the highlights are placed where we want them to be, if the character has a good depth, if the whites circulate well, if shadow zones are not too blocked in, if the eye is attracted to our subject, and so on. If the miniature can stand up to this test, I think that you can justifiably take a break.

And of course, don't forget to share your project within your social circle. Learn to sort out the instructive criticism from the bad. For my part, I never consider a project complete without showing it to my partner.

There are surely many things I have forgotten to mention that could help build the best image possible but with what I've written above I think that we can say we know how to aim for the best and avoid the worst...

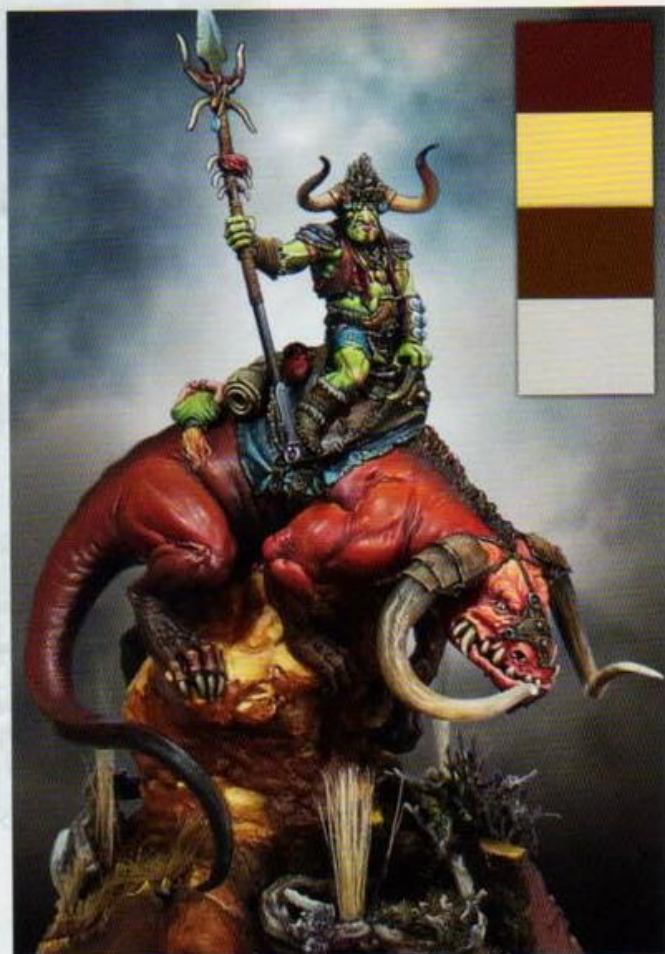
Lighting the base to emphasize the figure



VERUS - Figone - 54 mm



VARATAR - Andrea Miniature - 54mm



ROCCO - Figone - 54 mm

A full volume of Figopedia devoted to basing is planned for the near future. In the meantime, we can start by briefly defining some of the main principles.

Most of the time, the base serves as a picture frame, a support made to emphasize the miniature. We have seen how a dark zone can be used to emphasize a brightly lit zone. Try to use all the tools developed in this book to free the character from the base and to make it stand out.

Why do you think that in the majority of the examples in this book the miniature stands out so clearly and so starkly from the base? It is because

all the principles which we apply to a miniature should also be applied here: clearly define zones of light and shadow, be careful to focus the attention on particular points and make the light flow over the miniature, push the back and sides of the base into shadow so that the central space where the model is situated is bright and clear.

Notice that very often the strong concentration of dark areas on the edges draws the attention to the centre. Observe the edges of the base and ask yourself if the character is going away from you - like it was disappearing into the page of this book - or if it is coming out towards you.

INNOVATING WITH LIGHT SOURCES

Mixing zenithal and general lighting

Light is not just present in areas lit by the sun; the shadows also contain a quantity of cold colours, with spots of reflected light which are reflected by neighbouring objects. By extension, the ground and the environment also reflect the light in all directions. So the lighting is never as intense as if there was only one unique source. A bit of artistic freedom is in order when treating shades and highlights, which is not as straightforward as the theoretical explanation given here might suggest. Therefore, unless the atmosphere or the painter's choice imposes otherwise, the majority of miniature painting projects are a **mix of zenithal and general lighting**.

How to paint projected shadows ?

Painting the actual shadows cast by the miniature on the ground or on other surfaces can sometimes be a delicate exercise. The viewer can turn the miniature in his hands and look at it from any direction so fixed shadows cast in a particular direction are generally a "faux pas". We can strengthen the shadows by outlining large elements directly in contact with details (a large bag, an arm around the body, the shadow around the feet). Shadows are only created on the miniature when they are very close to the body, and very rarely if they are not in contact with the body (e.g. the shadow of a spear or a outstretch hand held in front of the body).

On this model, the lighting isn't strictly zenithal. We can see that the front is "laterally" lit to underline the hair, that the point of the blade is lit towards the bottom to make it stand out from the base and make the splashes pop out, and, other example among many others, that elements of the same are also lit "individually" to make them clearer.

QUEEN OF SLAUGHTER - Figone - 32 mm

Inventing the Light Source

This section is incredibly IMPORTANT.

The lighting systems which we have looked at so far are extremely useful and interesting for defining shapes. I used the word system because most of the time it's not about a real, visible light source but about an imaginary light source which we invented to explore each aspect of the shape, to explain everything and omit nothing. Since we are in the realm of the imagination and non-existent lighting, it's tempting to imagine a kind of tactile light, one which we could let roam like a fingertip over every detail of the shapes to better 'feel' and register the details. At first, the light strikes every shape from the front then it keeps decreasing as the shape of the figure moves away from the light and glides into darkness. Consequently, the centre of every shape is brightly lit and its extremities slide into shadow. In this system, the shadows and the lights **are arbitrarily created to improve the understanding of the model.**

You will have gathered that **I do not think that it is always necessary to rigidly use a single or a logical light source.** Sometimes it will be preferable to invent them to reveal a detail of the sculpture. Is lateral lighting logical in this place? It doesn't matter, it only matters that the result is attractive.

Sometimes in a precise area, the lighting may be totally arbitrary and will not follow the general style adopted on the rest of the model. If this choice allows for an easier interpretation of your miniature, stick with it - don't feel obliged to change it just to conform to a preconceived style.



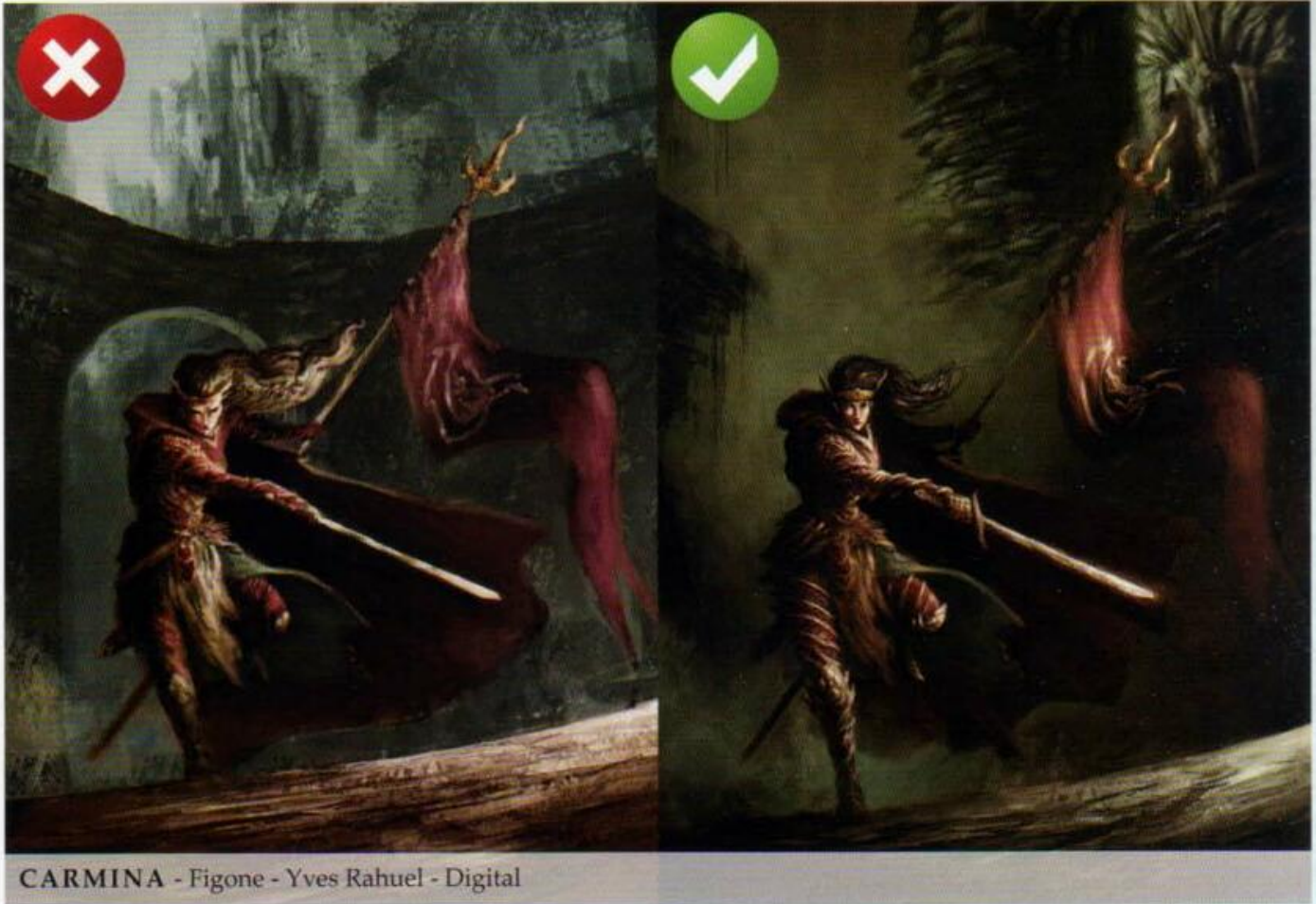
THE FLUTE PIPER - Games Workshop
Conversion by Jérémie Bonamant Teboul - 54 mm

The Flute Player is an excellent example of this approach. The direction taken by the light varies along the model and the reflections were created to highlight the prominent parts with the maximum amount of brightness - **don't forget to always try to emphasize an interesting shape.**

By applying the same strategy, the contrasts of light and shadows show that one shape is placed higher than another. So, the volume of the head clearly rises above shoulders. Similarly, the brightly lit knee rises above the leg which falls-off bit by bit into the shadows. This type of lighting is neither logical, nor natural but arbitrary and totally invented for the piece. It is **sculptural lighting** based on our sense of touch, our tactile perception of the forms as they approach or move away from us.

At first we think that the light is shining from above the head as the shadows thrown on the face seem to suggest. Nevertheless, that first impression is contradicted by the bright zones on the dorsal tubes. In the same way, the features of the face seem to be lit directly. I have invented a specific lighting style for each shape to reveal it as brightly as possible, by applying a maximum amount of light to its centre and gliding to into the shade at the edges. Certainly, the result could be chaotic, but the group remains coherent thanks to the very precise drawing of outlines and to the tones which closely tie them together. **Every shape is treated as a separate sculptural entity while all the individual forms together constitute a unified and coherent whole.**

A PRATICAL APPLICATION



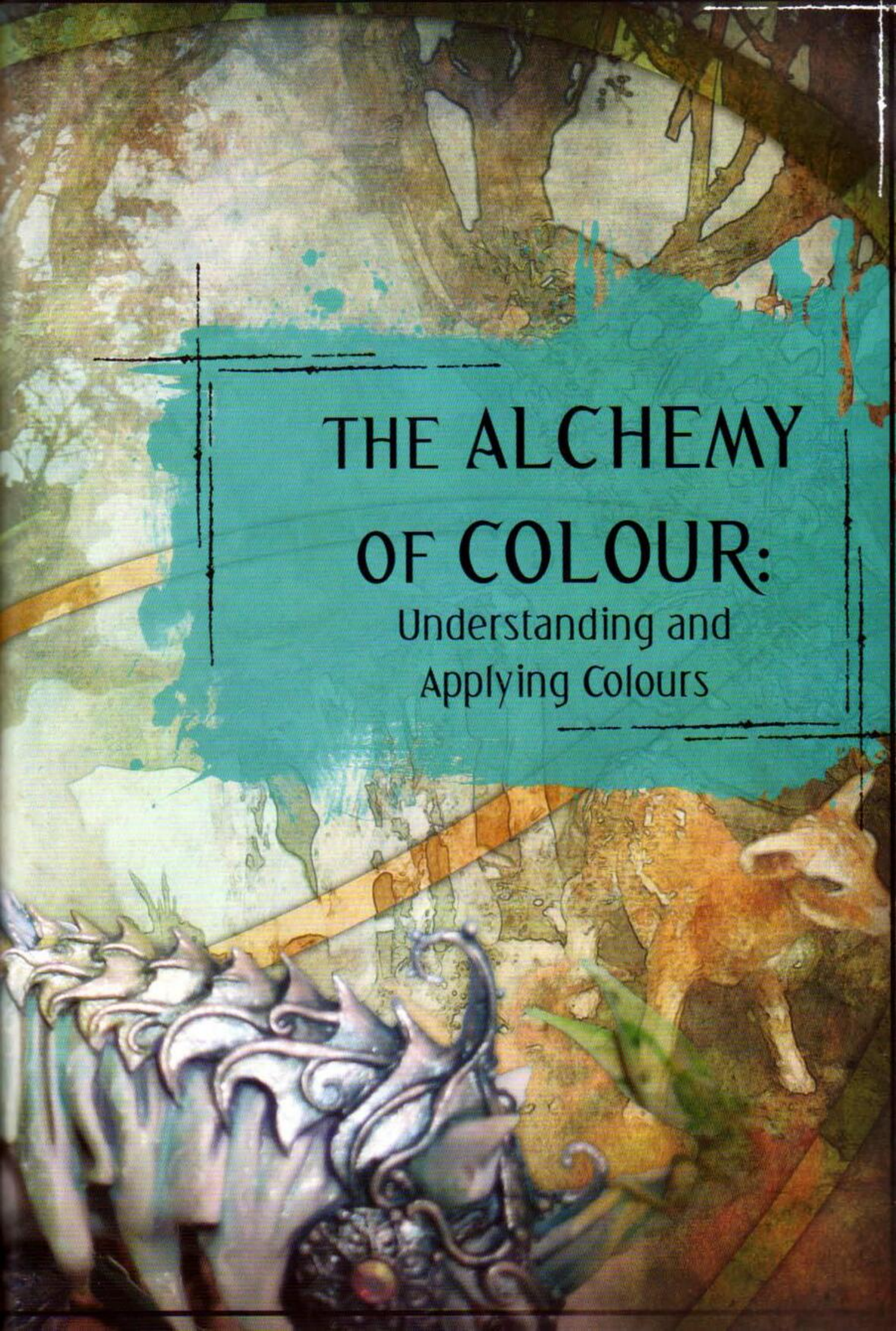
Here are two illustrations by Yves Rahuel. When he first submitted his work to me, I made a bet with him that he could improve by applying the same techniques that I use on my miniatures to his drawings. After much advice and correspondence between us, the results are incomparable.

For example, the work on the background and the ground, with their composition and contrast, put the foreground character to the front of the scene. On this knight, the strong elements (face, point of the blade, symbol of the banner, key points of the armor which define motion...) have been enhanced by intense highlights. The face is better defined to catch the eye, and large areas of the character are drowned in shadows, to emphasize the key parts of the characters, etc, etc. The eye is thus guided to the essential.

He only spent two weeks working on it so in this short time the progress is mainly «technical» but what helped him progress was the understanding of the theory of light summarised in this book. It is useful (and fun) to learn and master these techniques so that you can play with them to achieve results according to the atmosphere you want to recreate with your miniatures and their environments. Once you have mastered the basics, **it is then possible for you to imagine more complex and evocative projects**, for example a backlit scene (the miniature is lit by a light source from the ground, such as a campfire), or a night scene lit by the full moon (lateral lighting, with a bluish tint).

The more you practice, the more you will become used to the techniques, the more natural they will feel, and the more you will be able to release your artistic spirit. None of this will help you finish your miniature faster but if you can dedicate more time in search of the right atmosphere through light, as with colour, you will become a more proficient miniature painter.





THE ALCHEMY OF COLOUR:

Understanding and
Applying Colours

«Of all the qualities, colour is the most difficult to speak of.»

Aristotle



ROCCO - Figone - 54 mm

UNDERSTANDING AND APPLYING COLOURS

A world without colour would be a very dull place. Just imagine that the grass wasn't green, that the sky wasn't blue and that everything we looked at was just shades of grey. Colour helps define the world around us and influences how we feel. Everyone has favourite colours, clothing, design schemes, seasons, and the feelings that go with them. Just imagine yourself in the middle of a pale blue winter, or basking in the warm light of a summer sun; feeling the warmth or coldness of the environment and the colours that come to mind. Ask yourself, how do they make me feel?

It has been known for a long time that colour can affect us emotionally and that certain colours can be associated with specific reactions and feelings. The origins of this phenomenon are believed to be both cultural and psychological. However, we must be careful because such classifications of colours are highly subjective and different people can react differently to the same colour. For example, death represented in western culture by black, is not perceived in such an austere way in Muslim countries, and even less so in certain Asian countries where white is the colour of mourning (which in turn represents purity and union in the west). Something to think about ...



This is my library, sources of inspiration collected over the years: art books, filmography books, lots of "fantasy", sculpting manuals, history books...



The strength of colour is revealed in emotive expressions such as "feeling blue", «seeing red», or "a black mood". **Understanding how colour influences emotion is one of keys to successful painting.** Child psychologists can use this knowledge to infer aspects of a child's personality according to the colours used in their drawings:

- Blue: quiet, depth of feeling, sensitivity
- Red: vital force, emotion
- Yellow: spontaneity, enjoyment
- Purple / green: indecision and ambivalence
- Brown: comfort, security
- Black: Oppression, death.
- Grey: neutrality, absence of passions

Furthermore, the influence of colour does not stop at human emotion - colour can communicate much more in a painting, including a season, the weather, or a specific time of day.

So what's all of this got to do with miniature painting?

Well, painting a miniature is not just about applying colours, it is also about choosing them. A well-painted miniature can transmit strong feelings between the painter and the viewer through the use of colour. The colours you choose will influence your observers' impressions and provoke an emotional response. In other words, your choice of colour will determine if your miniatures will evoke a sensation of warmth and enjoyment, peace and intimacy, or drama and chaos. Useful, isn't it?

Your pigments can produce infinite combinations (it is said that the average person can distinguish up to ten thousand colours) but not everyone is lucky enough to naturally identify the best colour combinations to achieve their aim. While an in-depth knowledge of colour theory is not necessary for successful miniature painting, it can be a very useful tool. It is important to consider - and ideally understand - colour, since successful use of colour will help you add depth, sensation, mood, and texture to your work. Blending colours depends on your technique and how the pigments interact with each other, **but intuition and theory also play a role.**



QUEEN OF DEATH - Figone - 32 mm

Ultimately, colour choice remains subjective; based on feeling and personal awareness. The rules presented here are a springboard for your imagination, not shackles for your creativity.

Knowing your colours and how they interact is the secret of successful blending, however intuition and randomness have roles as well. As said above, physically mixing your colours is the only way to know how they will react.

So don't be afraid to give it a try and express yourself.



ROCCO - Figone - 54 mm

HOW TO OBSERVE AND DEVELOP YOUR SENSE OF COLOUR?

Learning to carefully observe and critically analyse what you see around you is fundamental to understanding colour. Developing this habit is more important than all the theories that we will discuss in this section. These days, many of us have difficulty really looking at things because we already have a preconceived image of that thing in our mind, often based on misconceptions. Ask yourself what colour is the sky, the sea, the sun, a tree, a roof tile?

Most people will imagine a world painted with the same colours we see in young children's drawings; a blue sky lit by a yellow sun over a blue-green sea. A brown tree trunk covered in green leaves next to a house with a triangular roof of red tiles, with a red brick chimney blowing out grey smoke. But reality is infinitely richer, more complex and less caricatured. **Interpreting this colourful reality and translating it into your own painting** will add value through a better depth of realism and increased originality.

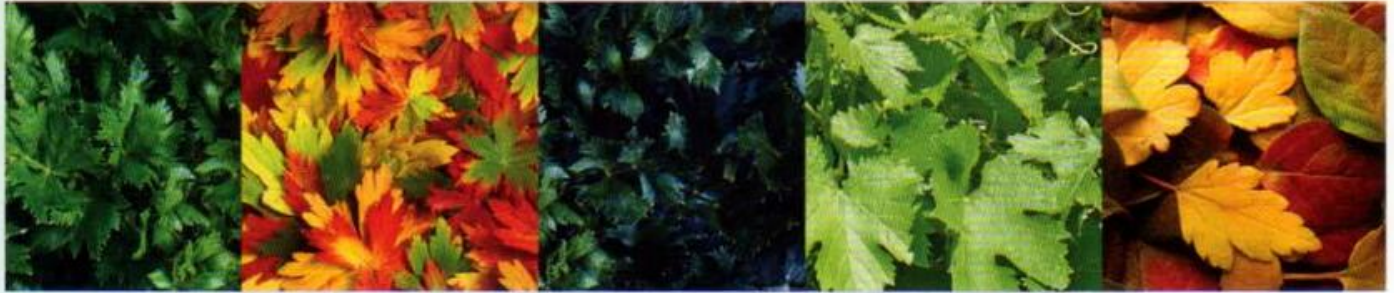
Going back to the example of our imaginary tree, the leaves are simply green, probably a bright green without much nuance. By going out and observing real trees around you, you'll soon discover that nature has much more imagination than we do. Why isn't our imaginary tree the warm purple shade of certain plum trees, the cool, greyish blue-green of some conifers, or the beautiful silver of the olive tree? If it has to be green, why not choose any of a hundred other possible greens? But it doesn't have to be green - why think of springtime foliage when it could have been autumnal red, yellow, orange, or brown?



GRALLAPOUSSAH - Jérémie Bonamant Teboul - 54 mm

THE ALCHEMY OF COLOUR: understanding and applying colours

The trunk of our imaginary tree is probably a sorry-looking brown, almost a cliché, a real old chestnut. By observing nature we discover that trunks and barks come in all shapes, sizes, and colours. Most are brownish grey, stained with greens and yellows by lichen. Certain trunks have a natural verdigris, others are almost black, still other are nearly white. **You have to observe what surrounds you and open your imagination to develop your colour sense and a real consciousness of colour.**



In the specific environment of the miniature painter, our imagination may also be restrained by certain manufacturers who popularise their own colour palettes and seem to have established a "right" way to do things through promotion and repetition; red highlighted with yellow, orcs with a lawn-coloured skin tone. I am very critical of any commercial point of view that may limit our imaginations (I'm looking at you GW). In the context of history, the problem is exacerbated by a concern for realism that often urges miniature painters to handle a figurine the same way. The need for realism on historical subjects - notably military uniforms - forces painters to paint multiple models in exactly the same way. This is ridiculous when we look at military painters of the time who didn't seem overly bothered by realism when it came to expressing their vision of reality. Food for thought.



THE ENCHANTRESS - Private collection - Sculpted by Christian Hardy - 54 mm

Interpreting colours

We can sometimes get confused or simplistic when we are asked to describe what we see. A person might swear that the trunk of a tree is brown and that the leaves are green, even as the golden light of the late afternoon sun turns them yellow and throws purple shadows onto the trunk. To make their art interesting, the artist has to look at what he paints, **trying hard to isolate the various tones which form the mosaic of colours that make up any object**. This process is now widely accepted but when impressionists first adopted this reality of colours they were highly criticized – which is always stimulating for an artist!

However, an artist doesn't always want to paint what he sees: he wants to use colour as a means of expression to interpret what he imagines. This interpretation of colour can be compared to music in the way that a musical arrangement consists of a series of notes - sometimes harmonious, sometimes discordant.



THE ENCHANTERESS - Private collection - Sculpted by Christian Hardy - 54 mm

AN EXERCISE IN OBSERVATION

Always be on the lookout for things to inspire you. You can find all sorts of photos on the Internet; furs, fabrics, skin colors, and objects of all kinds are all possible sources of inspiration. Don't forget that **observation is the key and that we often have a preconceived or simplified idea of colours which we need to overcome**. You can also build up a database of personal references by taking a small camera with you and keeping an open eye open for inspiration when you are out and about.

Go for a walk (in the city or the countryside, it doesn't matter) and find an object with an interesting colour. A piece of wood or bark, a leaf, a bit of rusty metal, an old piece of sun-bleached paper - it really doesn't matter what. When you get back home, try to reproduce the exact combination of colours on a scrap of paper with your paints. Unless you have an exhaustive range of paints, you will likely need the theory presented in this section to create your mixtures. When you've finished, compare your results to the original. Was it as easy as you thought it would be?

If you think you can paint without leaving your chair, you're wrong. **Don't start reading the following sections before you've gone for a walk outside, really opened your eyes, and tried to rid yourself of your preconceived notions**. Once these obstacles are out of the way, we can move on to the more theoretical aspects of colour.

EXPLORING THE CHEMISTRY OF COLOUR

What is a colour?

Colour can be hard to describe. Technically, it is the human visual interpretation and reaction to the categories called red, blue, yellow, green and others. Describing colour also uses a lot of familiar but technical words so it is worth learning to recognise and use this terminology properly when discussing colours.

Hue



Lightness



Saturation



Playing with hue, saturation, and lightness on your palette can be like a graphic designer dragging a mouse around his colour picker trying to find the right colour.

We can use these three characteristics to talk about colour accurately:

The hue (or shade) is what we most commonly refer to as "colour". For instance: blue, green, red, orange.

The lightness (or value/brightness) is the position on a scale of light to dark.

The saturation is essentially the amount of "grey" a colour has in it. A saturated colour is very vivid (little or no grey), while a desaturated one is very dull (more or mostly gray).

So pink is a hue of red, with a high light value and is desaturated because of the addition of white.



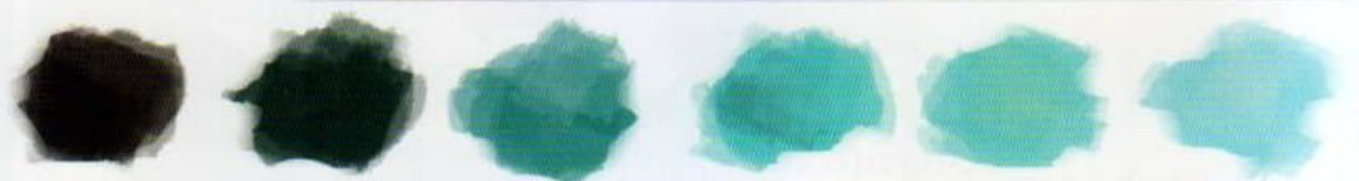
Hue

Hue is perhaps the easiest colour property to grasp. It is the appearance of the colour itself. Hues include green, blue, red, purple and so on. They can be visualised going round the circumference of a color wheel.



Lightness

The lightness (value, brightness or luminosity) is a property of a colour that adds information: is it light or dark? Our perception of colour includes its value on the lightness/darkness axis and a colour's lightness on this scale reflects its capacity to reflect white light.

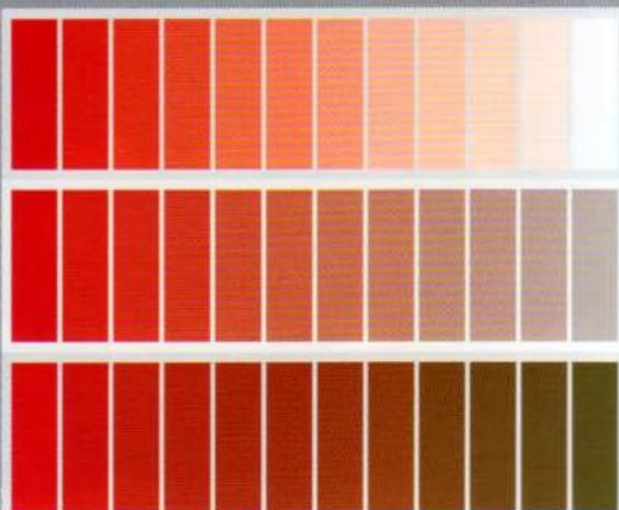


Saturation

The concept of saturation can be a little more difficult to understand but it is an essential concept to comprehend advanced colour theory. In essence, a saturated colour is vivid and intense colour; a desaturated colour is dull, muted, or neutral.



Many people tend to ignore the concept of saturation and work predominantly with pure colours. However, most of the work in colour harmony is based on understanding saturation.



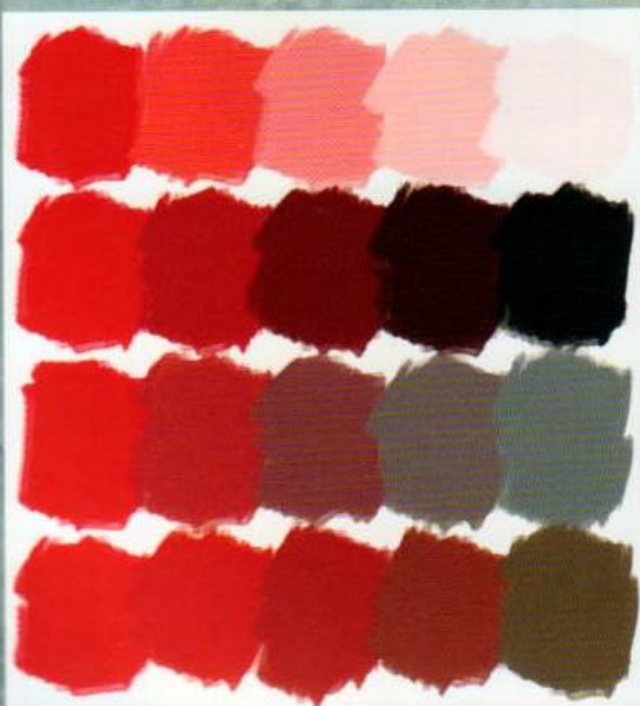
THE ALCHEMY OF COLOUR: understanding and applying colours

An intense colour can be desaturated in three ways; by mixing it with black or white (be aware that this will also change its lightness), by mixing it with a grey with the same lightness value, or by mixing it with its complementary colour (which can also change the hue AND the value). You have to be careful when desaturating a colour, not to unintentionally change other properties (temperature, lightness). Too much saturation can cause a colour to deviate from its intended effect.

SATURATION AND CONSEQUENCES



AN EXERCISE IN COLOUR: HUE, LIGHTNESS, AND SATURATION



Choose a pure, saturated paint, preferably a primary colour (see below). Then draw five small squares, side by side in a line, and paint the leftmost with your starting colour. Next, mix a little white with this colour (more or less one part white for five parts colour) and paint the box to the right of your starting colour. Gradually add more white to your mixture and paint the next boxes until you fill the last box with the brightest colour. Repeat the exercise on a second row of boxes, but this time gradually mix in black until the last box is almost completely black. Do the same on the third series of boxes, this time gradually adding a medium grey (50% black 50% white) to your base colour. Finally, repeat the sequence using the complementary colour of your base colour (see below) and paint your boxes until you obtain an almost neutral grey.

What is a colour wheel?



A colour wheel or colour circle is a way of organising colour hues that shows the relationships between primary colours, secondary colours, complementary colours, etc.

It is an essential tool for understanding how colours mix and interact.

There are many ways of various complexity to represent the colour wheel; the simplest version shows the three primary colours and the three secondary colours.

What are primary, secondary, and tertiary colours?

The **primary colours** are the three colours which we cannot obtain by mixing other colours and from which we can obtain all other colours. In traditional paint mixing (where colours are made from pigments bound by a medium), the primary colours are cyan, magenta and yellow. Physically mixing them is called subtractive combination because if we mix these three colours, we obtain a dark colour close to black. However, on a TV screen or computer monitor (where colours are formed by light) the primary colours are red, green and blue. This is called additive combination because if we mix the three light beams, we obtain white. The following sections use subtractive combination since we are dealing with paints.



THE ALCHEMY OF COLOUR: understanding and applying colours

The **secondary colours** are colours obtained by mixing two primary colours: orange (a mixture of yellow and red), purple (a mixture of red and blue), and green (a mixture of blue and yellow). The secondary colours are arranged on the circle between the two primary colours which compose them.

To take it further, we can add the tertiary colours which arise from the mixture of one primary colour and a neighbouring secondary colour on the colour wheel.

In theory, you can obtain any colour from the three primary colours (plus black and white). In practice, certain tints can be very hard - even impossible - to obtain. For example, it is practically impossible to obtain pure vermilion from magenta and yellow with our paints.

A BIT ABOUT BROWNS

The ranges of browns and chestnuts (red-brown, khaki, tans etc.) are difficult to obtain by mixing. It is recommended that you buy premixed browns for the sake of simplicity. Creating nice looking chestnuts or tans by mixing is based more on experimentation and feeling than on science.

What other types of colour wheels are there?



The colour wheel that we've been looking at so far shows only the hues. There are other more complex wheels which take into account not only hue but lightness and saturation.

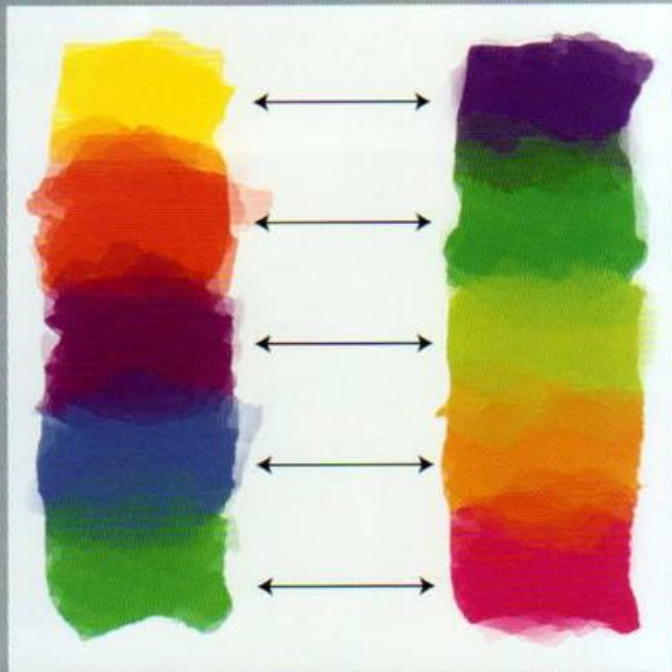
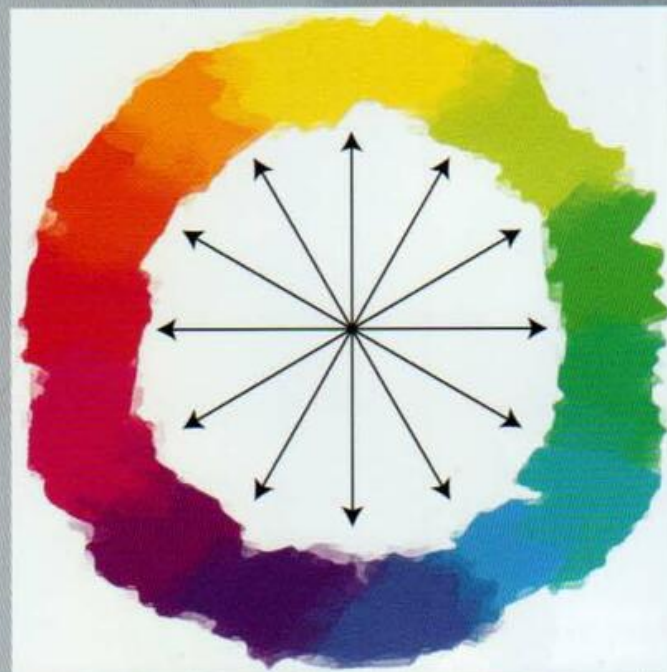
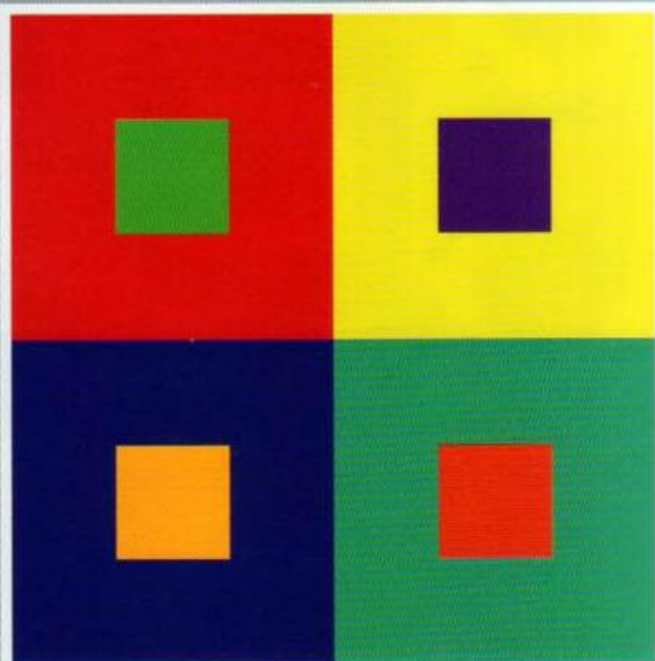
If we imagine a disk rather than the ring we've been using, we can add the colour's degree of saturation to the colour wheel. The colours around the outside of the disk represent maximum saturation and the closer the colour comes to the centre, the more they are desaturated. One advantage of using this variation is to show us the results of mixing complementary colours of different saturations.



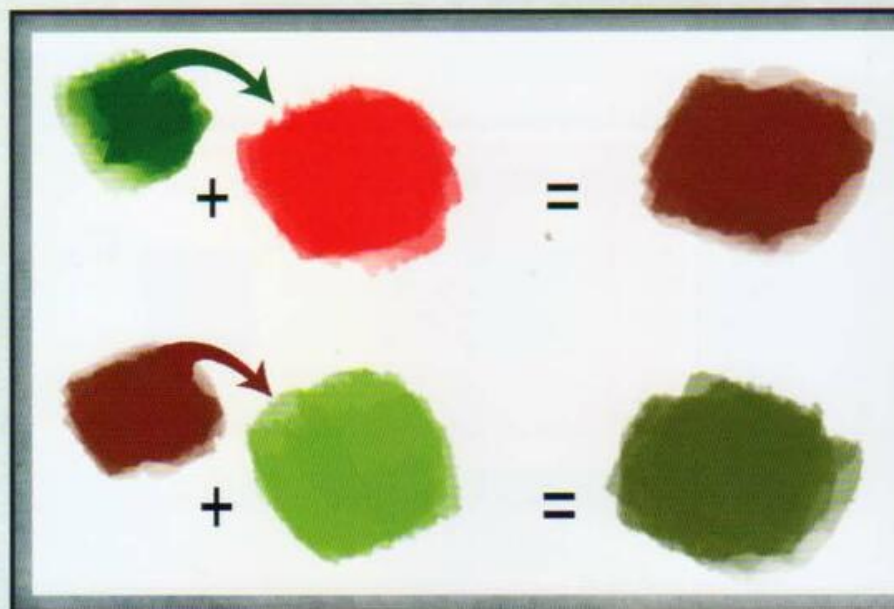
If we add a third dimension, we obtain a sphere we can add the value of lightness. The lower the colours are on the sphere, the lower the lightness (and the darker the color). The higher they are on the sphere, the lighter they are. Combining the disk shape above, the closer they are to the centre of the sphere, the less saturated the colours will be.

What are complementary colours?

Complementary colours are pairs of colours which, when combined in the right proportions, produce a very dark shade akin to black (remember we are talking about subtractive combination of colours here). When they are placed next to each other, they create the strongest visual contrast and they can be used to create dramatic visual effects. This book is full of examples. Luckily for us, these colors are easy to identify as complimentary since they are directly opposite each other on the colour wheel. Examples of complementary colours are red and green, yellow and purple, and blue and orange.



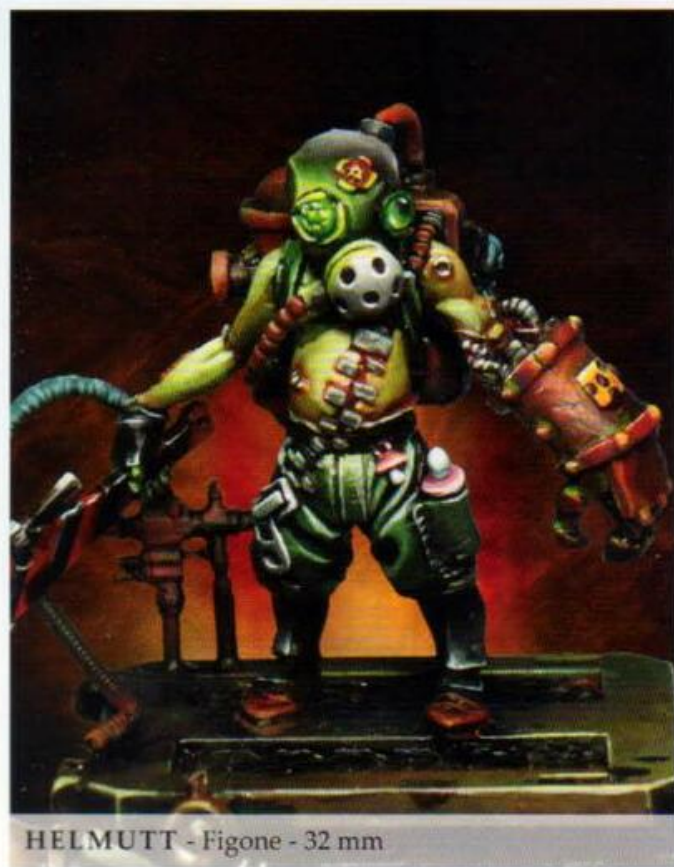
Mixing complementary colours will tend to form brown because you are indirectly mixing all three primary colours. The laws of addition and subtraction tell us that the colour will also be desaturated, and thus mixing them will the colour will become more desaturated. This "grey" (extrapolated term to describe a desaturated shade like the resulting brown) is often richer and more pleasing to the eye than a grey made purely from black and white.



Mixing with its complementary colour is a very useful way useful to darken a colour. They can be used to desaturate colour, for example, mixing a little green into an overly vivid red will desaturate it.

And vice versa!

Look at how the shadows and the green skin in this figure are nuanced with their complementary colour: red. The exact opposite effect was used on the gauntlet. This example is exaggerated for effect but it does highlight what we are talking about.



HELMUTT - Figone - 32 mm



AURLOCK - Kraken Edition - 32 mm

the green tones of the legging thus contrast with the brown/red tones (i.e. the complementary colour) of the skin.

How to use warm and cold contrasts to add depth ?



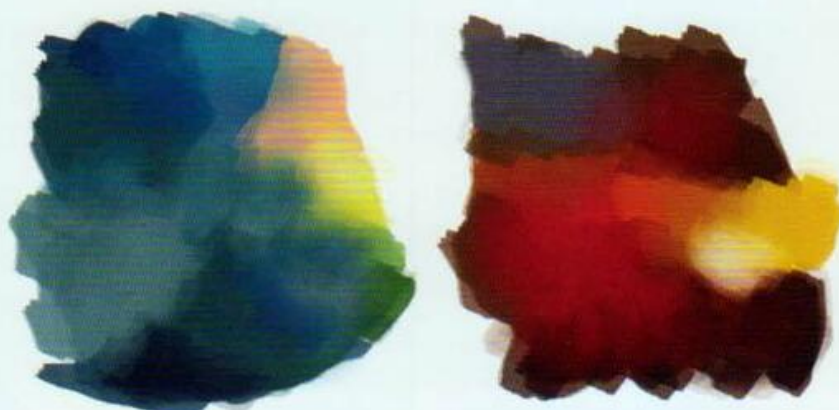
PROSPER - Figone - Bust



You can use a variety of techniques to give an impression of depth to your painted miniature. **One way is to give the furthest, least distinct elements vaguer outlines than those in the foreground; so that they seem colder and bluer, with softer contrasts and fewer details.**

In contrast, we can give elements that are closer to the observer more vibrant colours while keeping them clearly in focus and giving them a higher level of detail. We will take a moment to identify the **warm** and **cool** colours and discuss the contrasts and harmonies between them.

Here are some examples of warm and cool palettes. Notice how there is a different 'warm zone' in each one that emphasizes the whole.



Appreciate the effect of juxtaposing warm and cool colours in these two examples. It creates the impression that the yellow is popping out of the page while the blue recedes into the background.

Colours can be classified by their perceived temperature; the so-called «warm» colours are red, orange, and the yellow, and the «cool» colours are green, blue, and purple. When we talk about warm or cool colours we are talking about the visual sensations these particular colours evoke – it's has nothing to do with literal temperature.

Warm colours conjure feelings of warmth, golden hues, firelight, the sun, and autumn leaves. They are aggressive and draw attention; they can make parts of a model seem larger and closer to the viewer.

Conversely, cool colours give the impression of retreating from the viewer and are said to have a soothing psychological effect.



The colour wheel allows us to easily differentiate between warm and cool colours. If you divide your circle in half, the semicircle going from yellow through to red-purple (mauve) corresponds to warm colours. The half going from purple to green-yellow corresponds to the cool colours. The latter groups of colours are associated with the blues and the greens of water, the sky, moonlight, and nature.

Warm



Cold



Temperature variations also exist inside each colour family. As you can see in various examples, a red containing a little more blue or some pink will seem colder than a red containing more yellow, such as vermillion. While I tend to use similar mixtures of colours in my painting, **these subtle differences of temperature contribute to produce the unique atmosphere of each piece.**

While there is some physical basis to the classification of warm and cool colours, be aware that the distinctions can be somewhat arbitrary and subjective in the exact details of what is cool and what is warm. While green itself is considered a cool colour, we can also say that a green close to yellow is warm and a green close to blue is cool. Is purple a warm colour or a cool colour? The classification above would qualify it as cool. However, it's not too much of a stretch to say that purple is a cool version of red but also a warm version of blue.



TOAD AURLOCK
Kraken Edition - 32 mm



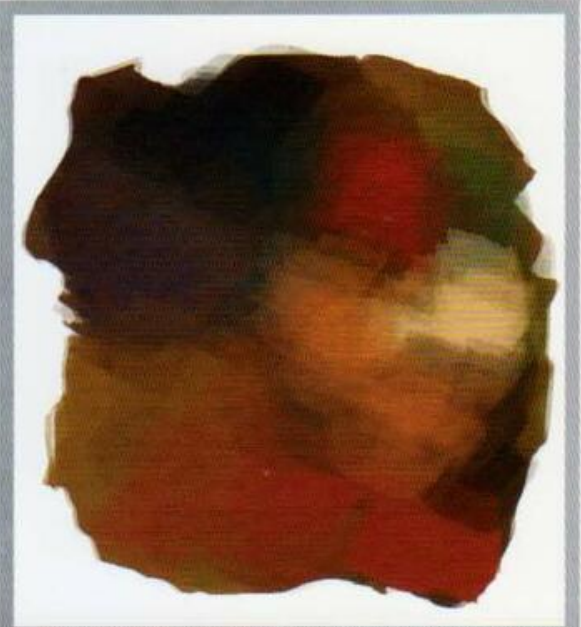
You can really appreciate the different nuances of green in these three miniatures. Sometimes green can be warm (like the skin in the example on the left, enriched with red and brown shadows) and sometimes it can be cool (like the right-hand example with its sky blue, and darkened deep blue skin. The bottom miniature shows a neutral version of green.

Yellow, a warm hue by definition? Sometimes yes, but other times...



Warm colours mixed with white, even in abstract art, cause few emotions. **They appear quiet and peaceful.** They can induce, at most, feelings of well-being and satisfaction. Primary and secondary reds, yellows and oranges can be used to create a **climate of tension.** But as artists know well, these colours are generally associated with feelings of enjoyment and with the sun. Cool colours, on the other hand, can give a painting an ethereal, magical atmosphere, as René Magritte proves with his pictures of the sky and "The man in the bowler hat": surrealist masterpieces. The warm colours, such as red or yellow, are said to be prominent and give the impression of overwhelming the more subtle colours, such as green or blue. **We will be demonstrating these effects throughout this book.**

Colour is an essential element of any composition. Some colours can dominate a painting and attract the attention while others appear to dissolve naturally into the background. The colours which stand out are known as prominent colours and generally consist of warm colours. The cold colours are said to be recessive and elusive. Application depends on the saturation of the juxtaposed colours. **A pure blue in the cool tones, for example, will seem to merge with the background next to a pure red in the warm tones, but both will stand out against neutral colours.** It is by the cunning arrangement of your colours that the viewer will be guided in the pictorial space.



Browns are no exceptions. Appreciate the nuances of warmth in the adjacent picture.



LE GRAND RASKALL - Figone - Bust

See how the blues in this bust add depth and how we have the impression that the buttons, the wounds and the teeth (painted in warm colours) pop out of his/her mouth. The effect would have been nowhere near as striking if the teeth had been more grey.

Therefore we can cool or warm a colour according to our desires and objectives. You will see that in our painting we are often concerned with **reconciling cool shadows and warm highlights**, to achieve similar values of saturation while blending.

Blues

Blue is a cool colour which reminds us of the cloudless sky, deep, clear water and it is synonymous with distance, coldness, and mystery. It becomes calmer and softer as it approaches green. **For depth, blue is often mixed with other colours for shading.** It is rarely used with its complement, orange, because it can look out of place in a colour scheme unless you want to explicitly desaturate the colour. Blue is hard to warm, barely able to approach purple. It is similar to grey in many respects, it is simple to desaturate, and it is often used in military uniforms.

To keep your blues bright and intense in the highlights, replace white with a flesh colour or beige for tints. For really deep blues it is helpful to add a spot of purple in the shading. Adding some blue to all the shadows can help to harmonise the different elements on the model.



ORACLE SORNHA - Kraken Edition - 32 mm

Yellow is a very bright, warm colour. It reminds us of the sun and light and it is synonymous with pleasure and prosperity. The main problems with yellow paint are the lack of covering opacity and its ability to hog all the attention when a highly saturated version is used. Yellow needs to be applied to a very clear and well prepared base colour, or desaturated with greens, grey, or beige. It is cooled and becomes softer when mixed with green. **It is not easy to shade because it's so bright. It is often necessary to use browns and greens for shading and avoid reddish tones.** You can shade or desaturate yellow with its complements; purple, carmine, or magenta. It is a delicate job but very effective if you get it right. A cool yellow tending towards green also seems quite natural. Avoid the temptation to use orange for shading; warm brown tones do the job better.

Yellows



DU MYTHE À LA RÉALITÉ - Création - 54 mm

Reds

Red is a warm colour. It suggests violence, fire, aggression, and excitement. It can be warmed by highlighting towards orange, and cooled in the shadows by adding blue. Red is often considered an easy colour to work with and a good colour for beginners; but things get more complicated the more we examine this hue. Red can react badly to highlighting, tending too easily towards pink or yellow, often with inelegant results. It shades magnificently with its complement, green, or even blue.

Brightening red while avoiding bright orange or pink is best done by starting with a medium orange tint then lightening with beige, cream, peach, light flesh-tones, or even grey. If red has been brightened with white, apply a red glaze afterwards.



AVALONNIAN PRIEST - Kraken Edition - 32 mm

Greens



ZORABETH - Andrea Miniature - 54 mm

While green is not a primary colour, it deserves our attention here because it is a very rich colour which can vary enormously according to the colours used to make it up. Green can represent nature, peace, nostalgia, happiness, and joy as it tends toward yellow. It can also represent coolness and water as more blue is added. It can be lightened with any bright colour, warm or cold, saturated or desaturated. It can also be shaded with lots of colours, from natural choices like blue and brown to complimentary colours like red and purple. The green pallet is immensely rich and versatile.

A common error is to lighten a bluish, cold green with a bright, warm green (or vice-versa) which will make a yellow. This contrast can often look garish unless some brown hues are used to tone down the colour gradient.

Using warm and cool colours to shade and highlight without desaturation

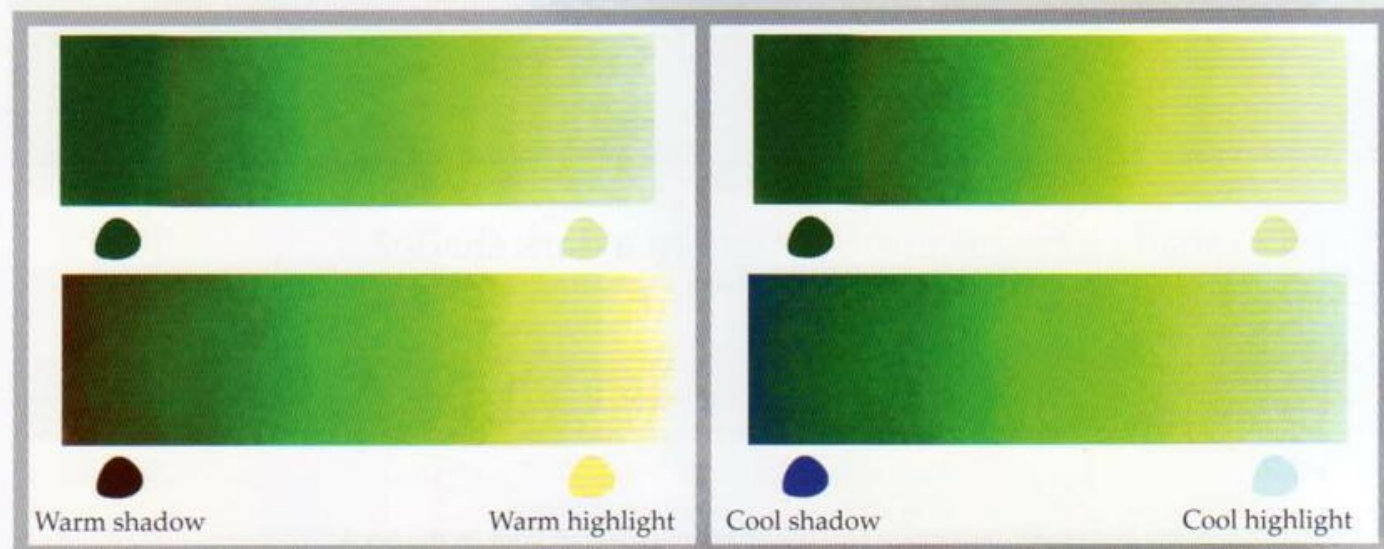
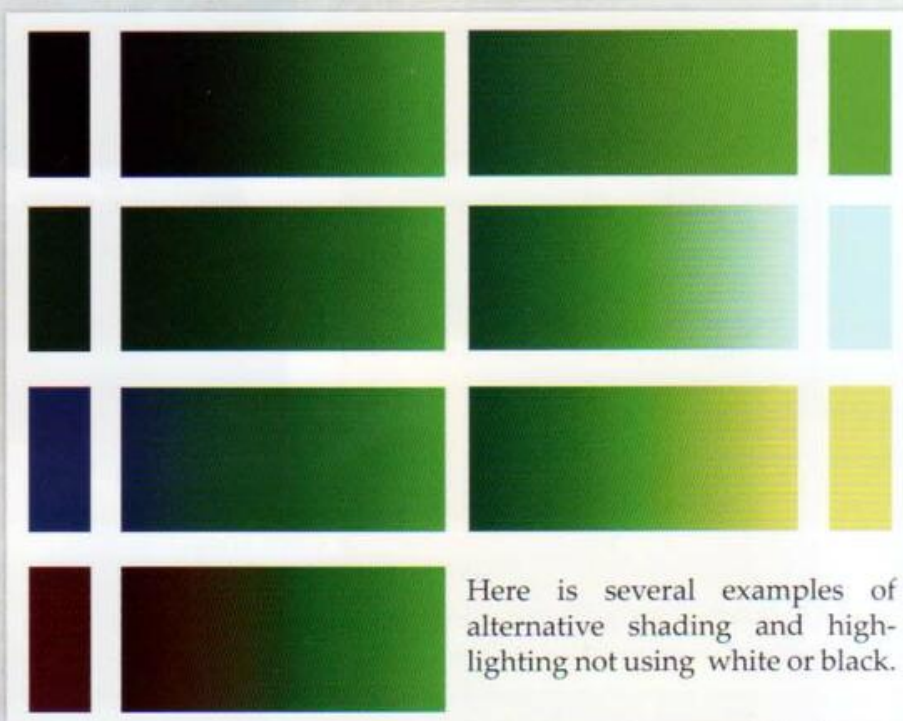
I always recommend using a variety of colours and values to create interesting shadows: not just black. I rarely shade colours with black or brighten them with white. **Adding black or white only serves to taint the colour, this is a fundamental point to remember.** There are many artists who remove black and white from their palette entirely, but this might be a bit excessive as they can still be useful in certain circumstances. Learning to know which colours will darken others well comes with experience. A common practice is to lighten with warm or cold tints rather than neutral ones such as pure grey, light grey, or white.

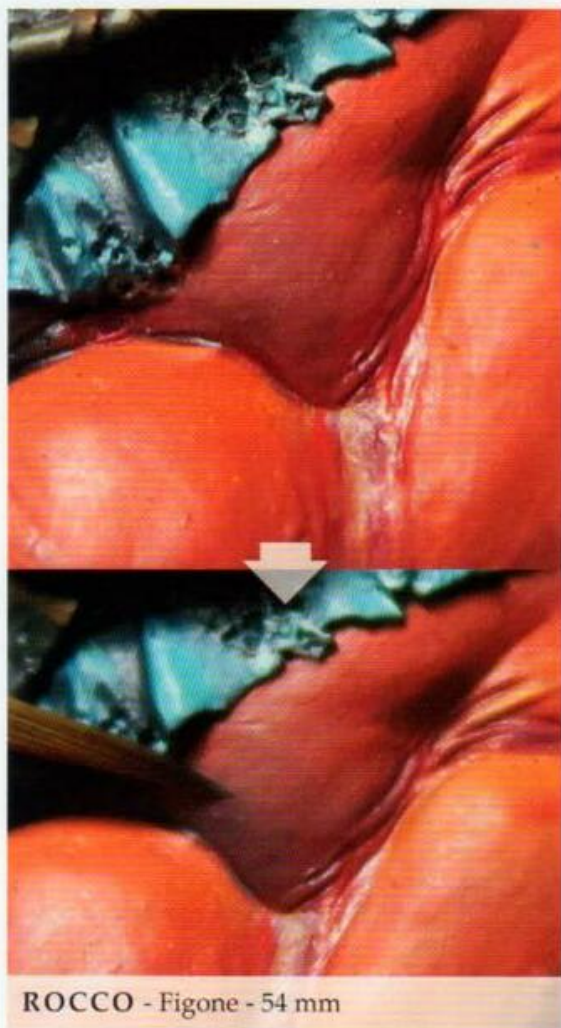
Like the colour wheel, the colour value scale shows bright colours and dark colours. **Yellow is the brightest colour on the colour wheel while white is the brightest on the scale of values;** mauve is the darkest on the wheel and black is the darkest on the scale (if you make a black and white copy of the colour wheel, you'll notice that yellow is very bright and blue-purple is very dark).

Variations in values create the appearance of shape and dimensions in your paintings; incorporating yellow in the highlights will produce a brighter colour, even compared to white, adding blue-purple to the shadows will give more depth.

Colour theory shows us that blue creates a sensation of distance while yellow suggests closeness. For all these visual reasons, **the simultaneous use of these two tricks for shading and highlighting creates a warm-cool contrast.** Dark blues are ideal for shading, producing pleasant depth and colouring without distorting the original colours too much – as long as they are not used excessively. This book is full of examples where dark blue was used to shade, even though it can be a bit hard to appreciate that subtlety in a printed picture.

Here is an example of the same green shaded and highlighted successively with with cool and warm shades. Both are plausible, it depends of the context.





To illustrate this paragraph, Rocco's skin is a good example. Dark blue has been added in the shadows with a final glazing.

On the other hand, a discrete warm tint of yellow has been added to the highlights. The colour is then richer, more contrasted and nuanced...



Off-whites, fair skin colours, and beiges are ideal colours for highlighting. Adding them to your highlight colours will give you brighter tints which appear less matte than if you had used white. This can work with greens, reds, browns, blues; in fact the majority of colours. The results can be surprising.

When to shade a bright tint, or brighten a dark shade?

Many painters avoid highlighting dark parts and hesitate to shade bright parts on a model. This can be a mistake as it can sometimes make the areas seem quite flat. If you look around, you will notice that even white clothes can have very dark shadows in some places, and that a black garment can have pronounced highlights.

We will discuss the treatment and black and white in more detail later in the book.



For a brighter value you can add white to a colour but in order to keep your colour clean and lively, also add a touch of the colour above it on the chromatic circle along with the white. For example, when you add some white to red to create a highlight, simply add a touch of orange to the mixture too. The same rule applies in the opposite direction when adding black to darken a value. Add a touch of the colour below it on the colour wheel to keep it vibrant. Remember you can dark use blues and dark reds to shade in place of black and avoid «greying» your shadows.

In summary, the use of white or black to respectively brighten or shade a colour can give a rather flat and dead result; but the highlights and shadows become more interesting and lively with the addition of other colours.

PLAYING WITH COLOUR CONTRASTS

What do we mean by contrast?

Contrast is a visual property which allows two different regions in an image to be differentiated. For example, in a black and white image, there is a strong contrast where we have very dark blacks and very brilliant whites near each other. On the other hand, we have low contrast when the image consists mainly of similar shades of grey. There are several methods of achieving colour contrasts in painting; different ways to obtain a strong and striking depiction of a miniature. Some of the most effective methods are discussed below.

Contrasting pure colours

An intense contrast is obtained by placing pure colours (with maximal saturation) side by side. It is even more striking when we associate primary colours.

It is the most obvious kind of contrast and the easiest to understand. But it is also one of more risky methods to use, because it can very quickly produce inharmonious results if we do not master the subject.



THE FLUTE PIPER - Games Workshop
Conversion by Jérémie Bonamant Teboul - 54 mm



Light-dark contrast

Playing on the difference between very dark zones and very light zones is a good way to bring out contrast. One way of doing this is by alternating the light and dark parts of a miniature (an example from the top down would be dark hair, fair skin, dark shirt, light pants). This creates a large difference between the base colors as well as the shadows and highlights. **This method can be very effective and relatively easy to implement because we can use it with a restricted (even monochrome) palette, reducing the risk of obtaining a gaudy result.**



CORBEAU SACHEM - Kraken Edition - 32 mm



Simultaneous contrast

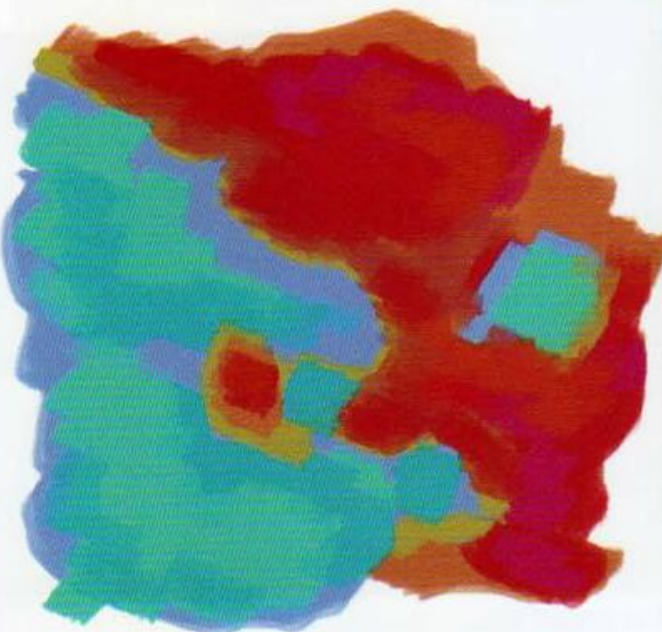
When we put grey next to a saturated colour, it seems to be slightly tinged with its complementary colour. This means that if we place red next to a neutral grey, the "grey" will seem cooler and a little bit greenish (the complementary colour of red). In the same way, a cool colour seems cooler next to a warm colour and vice-versa. A vivid red can be made to appear cold - sometimes almost green - when placed next to black or grey areas of a miniature.



QUI LI QUIN - Figone - 32mm

Warm-cool contrast

The juxtaposition of warm and cool colours creates a strong contrast. It can provide interesting results, but it is difficult to use while preserving the harmony of colours. It is often used to enhance shadows (warm shadows and cool highlights or vice-versa).



QUI LI QUIN - Figone - 32 mm

Quality contrast

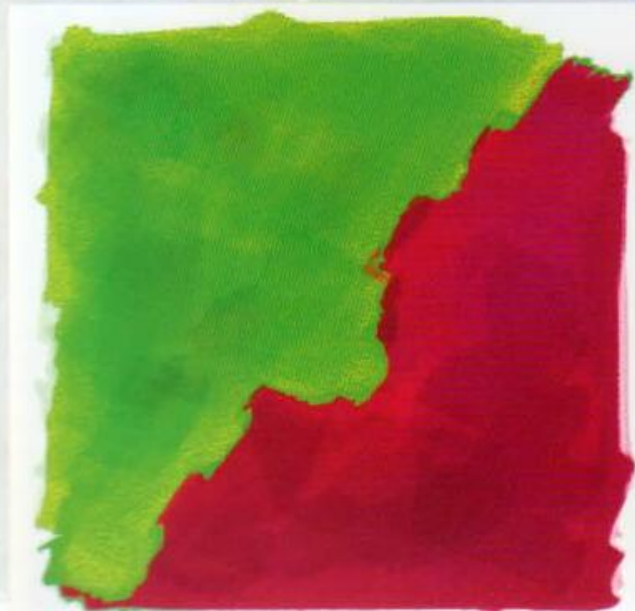
The quality contrast consists of juxtaposing saturated colours with desaturated colours. This is very good way to highlight particular elements on a miniature or to harmonize certain colours. This contrast will exist only if desaturated colours dominate the piece.



TOAD AURLOCK - Kraken Edition - 32 mm

Complementary contrast

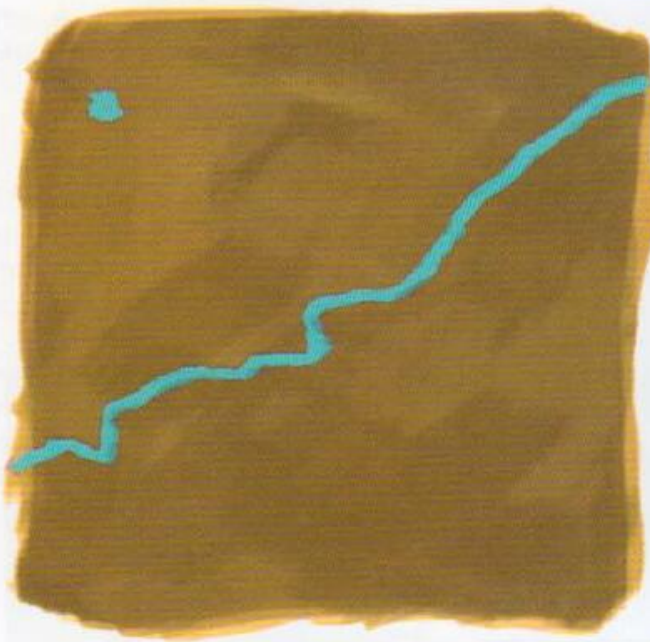
The use of complementary colours on the same part of a miniature will create a very intense contrast (red-green or yellow-purple) but can be very difficult to master and to harmonize. Used well, by cautiously managing the saturation of your paints and the extent of the surfaces covered by each of the complementary colours, **this contrast can add an unexpected richness and depth to your colours.** Use this technique with caution, pure hues in large areas of complementary colours can quickly become inharmonious.



HELMUTT - Figone - 32 mm

Quantity contrast

This technique is best used in combination with other types of contrasts, such as the contrast of complementary, temperature (warm-cool) or quality contrasts. It is achieved by painting large surfaces in one colour, temperature, or saturation value next to small surfaces painted in a contrasting colour, temperature, or saturation value.



ORACLE KHALIMANE - Kraken Edition - 32 mm

How do different colours affect one another?



ARCHÈRE KHALIMANE - Kraken Edition - 32 mm



LANCIÈRE DE JADE - Kraken Edition - 32 mm

Look at these two miniatures. The same beige has been used in both but one appears cooler because of the neighbouring colours. Can you determine which one?

THE ALCHEMY OF COLOUR: understanding and applying colours

An identical colour can seem very different based on the context of its environment. A yellow object on a black surface will seem brighter than the same yellow on a white surface.

A neutral colour (grey for example) will seem cool in a warm environment, and warm in a cool environment (see the explanation of simultaneous contrast above). Depending on the other neighbouring colours, two different colours can appear identical even when they are not. **A colour can appear darker if it is surrounded by a brighter one or brighter when surrounded by a dark colour.** This optical illusion can cause a flat colour with a brighter colour above and a darker colour below to seem darker at the top of the area and brighter at the bottom. A colour will seem brighter and more saturated on a large surface than on a small one. A very saturated blue next to a very saturated red or a saturated green beside a saturated red will seem to ooze and flow into each other, even seeming to vibrate.

THE SECRETS OF TONES AND HARMONIES

Colours have the power to transmit feelings, both good and bad. **A harmony of colours is a set of hues which evoke a pleasing response when painted and viewed together.** However, colour harmony is more complex than that because human responses to colour are both affective and cognitive, involving emotional response and subjective judgment. A person's response to colour can also be learned and influenced by their culture, as well as changing fashions. Our responses to colour, and the notion of colour harmony, are therefore open to a wide range of influences and factors.

The psychological impacts of colours



In the first example, the bright and warm yellows evoke a carefree and joyful feeling, but in the second, the sky appears filled with storm clouds and the darker and colder colours create a heavier more threatening sky. This gives a more dramatic and motionless aspect. The red tones of the third example express violence, passion, energy, excitement and speed while the green tones of the final example arouse concern, incomprehension and unease.

In all cases, the subject itself is unchanged, whether it is a cultural or a psychological effect, the chosen colours have a dramatic effect on the way the observer feels about each character. While you practice your observation and your colour mixing techniques, you will be learning to express a vast number of moods through your miniatures.

An understanding of how colour can affect mood will help translate the intended «feeling» of your work, as demonstrated by these various colour schemes. Colours affect mood; this means that **most people react emotionally to colours**. This is why colour plays an important role in the psychology of advertising and why colours for printed or televisual promotions are chosen very carefully. They are also considered for interior design. For example, lively colours such as red, orange, and other warm tints are not usually chosen for a peaceful place such as a hospital waiting room, but rather for somewhere like a cafeteria where people come and go more quickly.

The importance of a key colour

The choice of a main colour for your model will determine the overall mood of the finished piece and it should be carefully selected to express the desired atmosphere and narrative. It will be the main hue of the miniature, the one which directs the palette of the work as a whole. It dominates the scene to the extent that it is added to all other colour mixtures. Compare the feelings evoked by the following images:



RHINOTAURE - Allan Carrasco - 70 mm

Here is an example with a dominant yellow. A mixture of yellow and white is used in all the highlights. We can feel the overwhelming heat of the African savannah.



GALADRIEL - Games Workshop - 32 mm

Here are two interpretations of the same model. Don't you feel that the "yellow" version is more welcoming and telling you "Hello?" while the "blue" one is more stern and says "goodbye?"

What makes a harmonious colour scheme?

Painting a miniature with natural-seeming colours requires a harmonious palette, a unity of tones. A **harmony of colours gives the impression that all the objects of a scene are connected, under the influence of the same light** – be it hot or cold, pink or blue. To achieve this, the artist often uses similar tones, or applies a specific tone throughout a painting.

First of all, study your subject and select the colours which will work best. Then mix the values for the main colours so that the base colours go together well. Obviously, if the colours straight out of the pots are already in harmony there's no need to recompose them. As you paint, you can manipulate and modify the colours on your palette to produce an endless transition of colours.



AVALONIAN RETIARUS - Kraken Edition - 32 mm

Choosing a limited number of colours initially will facilitate the overall coherence of the piece. Colour placement is also important to achieve a visually pleasing balance. When seeking colour harmony, it is generally advisable to restrict yourself to one or two main colours and one secondary colour. Going beyond this limit makes it more and more difficult to produce a coherent figurine that doesn't look like a clown (which is to be avoided unless you are actually painting a clown).

COLOUR HARMONY THE EASY WAY

To help obtain a harmonious result, concentrate on light-dark contrasts and contrasts of quantity, which do not require a highly developed sense of colour. If you do not know where to begin, here is a "recipe" which works quite well:



QUI LI QUIN - Figone - 32 mm

THE 2/3 - 1/3 RULE

Define a main colour for your miniature (here black). This is the colour which will cover most (roughly 2/3) surfaces and will be the dominant hue. Then choose another colour, with a different intensity that synergize well with it (light beige will harmonize well with black). You will use this to paint 1/3 of the smaller areas. Finally, select the third colour, which can be a complementary to either of the previous ones, and which can be very saturated or form a strong contrast with both previous colours (here the red vials, some red skintone areas, gems). You will use this colour only for small, prominent elements (gemstones for example).

You will notice that most of the models through the book follow this schematic.

Why choose a reduced colour palette?

Here is an example where I used computer software to enhance the contrast to create a colourimetric "error". This demonstrates that when using a large colour palette we risk tarnishing the emotional qualities of the miniature, distracting the viewer with an excess of colour and overloading the senses.



AAHL - Figone - 54 mm

The nuances can be rich but the combination of too many colours will distract from other aspects of the model and damage the general harmony of the piece.

Colours which are closely related in value or tone are considered harmonious and the combination is generally pleasant to the eye. Colours which are close to each other on the colour wheel, such as yellow – orange or orange - red, are also harmonious because they are similar to each other. True primary colours and any mixture of two of them will give pure colours but as soon as we introduce a third colour the result is darker and duller. **To maintain vivid, lively colours, mixing should be minimised.** The more you work the colours on your pallet, the less vibrant they become. It will sometimes be necessary for you to abandon a mixture and to start again.

In such a subjective topic there can be no absolute truths and there is no holy grail hidden in this chapter. However, in many harmonious compositions we find that three colours used sensibly often constitute a successful formula.

We often find a dominant colour, a minor complementary colour with a stronger value, and a third intermediating tone that reconciles the first two. The intermediating tone is generally close to one of the first two (e.g. yellow and red, beige and brown). Unless they are the dominant colour, black and white are very rarely found in this pattern.



AVALONIAN SPEARMAN - Kraken Edition - 32 mm

The impact of a limited range of colour is obvious when a black and white picture comes to mind; this technique is well appreciated by photographers to create emotion.

Complementary colour schemes

In nature, you can often observe complementary colours together. For example, although greens vary greatly between species of tree, they all contain a touch of red. When colours are correctly mixed to create grey, the slightest touch of colour associated with the mixture is going to stand out. This is the way to obtain a harmonious balance; the examples in this section make use of two groups of dominant colours.

Two similar tints compose the main colours of the miniature, and a minor colour from the opposite side of the colour wheel is the third hue. **This is a great recipe to create a beautiful harmony using a complementary colour scheme.** You will also notice the minor, opposite tint is often used to draw attention to a specific part of the model.

This model is made of two close hues and a third minor tone on the opposite side of the colour wheel. This is a nice recipe to create harmony using a complementary colour scheme. You can notice that often the opposite tint is used to highlight specific section of the model.



QUI LI QUIN - Figone - 32 mm

Painting with neutral colours

MIXING NEUTRAL COLOURS

To create your own neutral colours, mix the three primary colours (red, yellow, and blue) or two complementary colours (red and green, yellow and purple, or blue and orange). These mixtures will be richer and more complex than any neutral hue coming straight from a tube of paint.

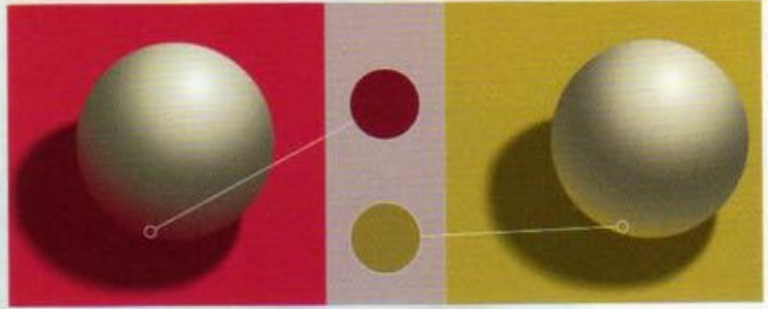
The first instinct of the beginner is often to use the most lively and vibrant colours available, thinking that this is the best way to create a beautiful miniature. But nature is filled with an incredible variety of magnificent browns and greys, all with nuances of red, blue, purple, and green. Depending on its specific composition, the neutral colour tends towards blue, yellow, or red. However, we need to see them side by side to be sure. **Using a variety of neutral hues in your painting will allow the zones of colour to look their best.** Try to use multiple tones of grey and white with nuances of other colors to counterbalance the more lively tints. They will echo each other to create an impression of harmony in the miniature like a unifying backdrop.



EINSTEIN - Figone - Bust

Colour coordination

Even skilled painters who build their work piece by piece take care to correctly integrate each piece into the whole. **Colour coordination**, besides creating a pleasant harmony, ensures that the finished work moves in the desired direction.



AVALONNIAN BUST - Figone - Bust

In this example, the intermediate tones are "joined", next to each other on the colour wheel: we find purple in all the shadows, orange in the mid-tones of the various zones of the miniature and beige in the light tones. Use sparingly for balance and best results.



The progressive mixture of two colours can give unexpected and useful results for colour coordination. These tones will be harmonious if they are used together on a miniature. In this example, orange and purple were gradually added to each other, allowing us to obtain a colour range going from intense purple to bright orange, via diverse nuances of red and browns.



How to juxtapose two opposing colours like red and blue on a model? Easy: incorporate one to the other!

Dark blue in the red's shadows and light red (pinkish) in the blue's highlights. And that'll do the trick!



GAME OF LIFE - 54 mm - Sculpted by Jérémie Bonamant Teboul

TRICKS AND TIPS: ADDING GREY TO COMPLEMENTARY COLOURS.

As you may have noticed, the colour wheel is useful in selecting complementary colours which once mixed tend to produce browns. So, to tie the colours of a model together, or to draw a more high-intensity colour into the rest of the model, mix it with its complementary colour to mute it back towards the other colours of the model.

In much the same way, you can use grey to bring a pure hue into harmony with another colour.

Colouring light and shadow to harmonise colours

Unifying the highlights and shadows throughout a miniature - for example a yellow/ochre for warmer highlights or adding cool, dark blue to all the shaded zones - helps to create an overall harmony on the miniature. Combined with a sensible choice of colour, this approach can achieve a beautiful, colourful atmosphere. I still recommend not including too much temperature variation in the colours. So a miniature which we wish to appear cold but includes yellow and red, will use a yellow which tends towards green and a red which tends towards purple, and vice-versa for a miniature which we wish to appear warm. **Purple** is thus a relatively cold tint for a «globally warm» miniature and a relatively warm tint for a «globally cool» figurine.



TAHAR AMHA - Figone - 32 mm



Compare both these examples. Appreciate how on the “good” example, the warm and cool tones blend in to each other on the palette to unite both temperatures of colour.



It is important to clearly define the atmosphere you are after from the start so that you know what to work toward. Notice in your everyday life how the light influences everything around you, regardless of where or when you are: in the city, the countryside, or the middle of nowhere, in the daytime or at night... wherever, whenever...

LIGHT TEMPERATURE



KING ARTHUR - Figone - 54 mm



Appreciate these different examples; In one version, the two red and yellow zones are so different that they appear not to belong to the same miniature, and in the other one the harmony between the two colours imply that the same light surrounds the character. Within the "good" example one bathed in warm light, the other in cool light.

How to enrich colours and use intermediate shades



The first blending of this schematic is poor, without nuance. To enrich this blending, I first added warm tones in the shadows using a dark red, and I broke this warmth with dark cold blue shadows. This mix of turquoise and black which is one of my favorite mixes has the advantage of intensifying things because of the turquoise with a little low in saturation because of the black.



Be careful, you need a soft touch with the blue shadows in order for this coolness to be "undertoned" and to avoid a bicoloured miniature!





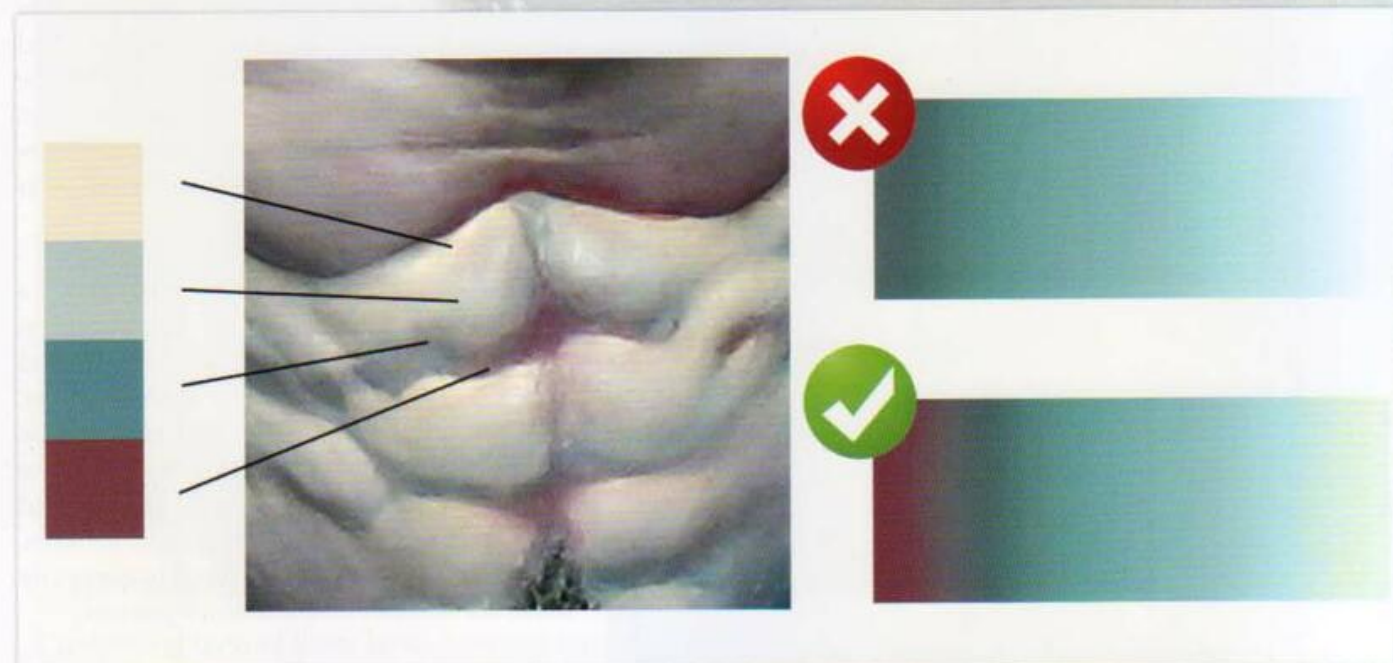
From a colourimetric standpoint, you can isolate the warm and cool shades as I demonstrate in these two illustrations.

If you have a trained eye, you notice that I go with the theory of the “focal point” previously mentioned in this book with the blue shadows. Thus, I am guiding the eye toward the upper body by “cooling” and darkening the lower body. It’s a very important aspect of this chapter, be mindful of it.



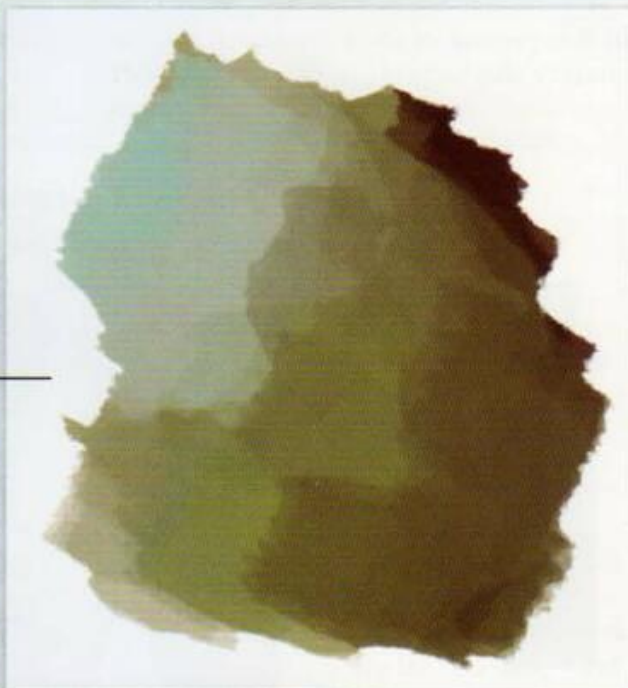
Here is the rendering of the model having swapped the dark blue areas for dark brown areas, hence not “cooling” the shadows.

In this version of the minotaur the same analysis applies, but starting with a cool dominant tone. Can you analyze this second version by yourself?





AURLOCK CHAMAN - Kraken Edition - 32 mm



While blue and yellow are frequently used in the darkest shadows and the most intense highlights, the nuances of red and green can moderate these extremes, in particular for the skin and to make cool shadows. Browns, obtained from mixing the primary colours go with everything, which explains why they are so often used to link highlights (beige flesh-coloured etc.) with zones which do not require any particular focus.

The influence of the seasons, daylight, and the colours of twilight



QUI LI QUIN - Figone - 32 mm

The colour of light can also imply the time of day. When you prepare to paint, you have to consider the time of day in which your scene takes place because the colour of the light changes accordingly. For example, morning light tends to be cool and any objects touched by it will appear to be bluer. To help you to represent various times of the day, **select one «colour temperature» and add a little of this colour to all your mixtures.**

Moonlight is a unique light source - under a clear sky, a full moon can fall flat on a vast area barely illuminating it. In an enclosed area like a city street or a tree-lined lane, the moonlight is reflected in diverse ways by different surfaces. We therefore have a primary, direct light source and secondary, indirect, reflected light sources. By moonlight, the environment is generally dark; silhouettes and shadows prevail.

Remember that even “direct” moonlight is actually a reflected light – emitted by the sun and bounced back by the surface of the moon. Consequently, moonlight is never as bright a light source as a flashlight or even a match. **The light of the moon is cold, silver, and subdued.**



ATHELA - Hasslefree Miniature - 32 mm

This character is directly lit by the light of the moon, but also receives the violent light of the torch.

The direct lunar lighting comes from overhead and strikes the shapes perpendicular to the direction of the light especially: the top of the skull, the breast, and the thigh.

The indirect light comes from the right. The background is obviously dark but still gives the impression of brightness and light.

The colours of early morning and nighttime are softer and cooler than those of the day because in the morning and evening, the air is generally cooler and clearer and the ground is fresh, creating a more diffuse light. Although the light is soft, it can nevertheless offer many dramatic colours.



LION BUST - Figone



LIONESS BUST - Figone

Comparing both of these busts, you can feel that were not represented under the same sky.

THE ALCHEMY OF COLOUR: understanding and applying colours

In the day, a good painter will make the viewer feel the weather represented on the miniature and its base. For example, a light source blocked by clouds, the raw light of noon, the overwhelming heat of a summer sky, or the greyness of an overcast day will all influence the work of the painter in their own way. A sunset can be very soft, but also very dramatic. The sky can be blazing but a sunset isn't inevitably brilliant or richly orange and red, it can sometimes be very delicate.

Just as you can use the temperature of a colour to suggest a particular moment of the day, you can also use colour to suggest a particular time of year. See how by adjusting your pallet, you can suggest the freshness of spring, the maturity of summer, the richness of autumn, or the cold of winter.

Spring is a season of revival; bringing to mind yellows, light greens, and the vibrant tones of flowers. Remember to keep your colours clear, cool, and fresh. Make the summer come to life by saturating your pallet with deep greens. Choose both warmth and the coolness for your trees to give them depth and texture, and keep the sky a sunny blue.



AFRICAN WARRIOR - Duranhal - 54 mm

You can perceive the radiating rays of a sun setting on this model.



PIRATE BUST - Latorre Models

We can easily imagine this character under a grey cloud when a thunder storm is about to break out rather than on a sunny deck of a ship.

Imitate the deeper colours of the autumn by warming the scene with oranges, reds, browns, and dark greens. More pronounced shadows will also imply shortening days. To suggest winter, dominate your scene with cold blues and mauve tones **but remember that it is necessary to add a little warmth to provide contrast.**

What you've learned about colours thus far - including primary and complementary colours, warm and cool tones, tints, shadows, and highlights - will provide you with an inexhaustible choice of colour. Experiment with different mixtures to help develop your own pallet for your compositions. This entire book contains examples and combinations of colour to help you get started. Above all, have fun when you paint, and observe your increasing excitement with colours.

WORKING AT THE EXTREMES: MASTERING BLACK AND WHITE

White does not necessarily mean an absence of colour; in fact, white objects are filled with reflections of colours the around them. For example, white clouds will display the intense colours of sunset and white snow will reflect the colours of the nearby landscape and perhaps the sky. Moreover, you do not have to paint exactly what you see; you can also change the intensity or range of colours reflected by your white to enhance your composition. Keep this in mind while you paint and save the pure white for the brightest highlights on your miniatures. In a well-planned painting, you can see how a water-colourist keeps certain areas white by painting around them from the start.

Black is not a colour which naturally produces grey tones. Because of its lack of brightness, it is only going to darken the clarity of the tint. **But black can be used to shade a colour, creating a visually different colour.** For example, a yellow shaded with black is going to appear green; a red shaded with the black is going to look purple. When black is used as a pigment the colours fall in the family of blues because blue mixed with yellow gives green and blue mixed with red gives purple.

The dramatic power of black and white

Black and white have dramatic communicative powers when they comprise the majority of your miniature. Just like a black and white photograph, monochromatic figurines can produce an intense effect.



Many shades of grey

Painting grey is not as straightforward as it might seem at first glance. The choice of which grey to use depends largely on what we want to represent, what other colours are present on the model, and the general tone of the figurine. **It's better to use a grey colour close to the other tones already represented on the miniature to produce a pleasing result for the viewer while strengthening the unity of the composition.** On the other hand, we could opt for contrast: a more challenging exercise to be sure.

Adding a colour already present on the miniature to your mixtures of black or white will help viewers interpret the regions as black or white, rather than the beige or blue they really are. Know how to compose your mixtures; adding a tint to black is usually subtle since other colours are easily absorbed by the darkness of the black. Contrarily, the slightest addition to white will change it very quickly and can give an ungraceful chalky aspect. Some of the examples in this book should help you to understand these concepts.



AURLOCK SPEARMAN - Kraken Edition - 32 mm



Pure black and pure white should be reserved for only the deepest shadows and the brightest highlights. As was explained in the section on zenithal lighting earlier, **we have to rank the dark and clear zones according to their orientation and ability to catch the light.** As soon as the first gradations emerge from these extreme zones you will have to start integrating nuances into the tint using the right grey. To facilitate this work, the base coat should already contain this nuance of colour.

Working with black



CRIMEAN WAR SOLDIER - Latorre Models - 54 mm

It is often said that black doesn't really exist, that it's not a colour that it is only a visual interpretation of something that has no colour. There are really only very dark blues or very dark browns, but no real, pure black. But in every line of artist's paints, you will see "black" written on tubes of paint of their darkest pigments, though they also contain blue. To see for yourself, mix "black" with yellow and you will get a green tone.

This colour is so neutral it absorbs the colours that we mix it with as well as the contrasts of neighboring tints. So, to avoid overwhelming the subtle nuances, **we can mix a small proportion of a tint other than black into the darkest shadows.** This shading is very subtle, but its effect will be striking for painters who focus on every little tint and variation. One simple exercise uses a mixture of black and 10% beige. Beige is rather neutral so we obtain a little coloured gradation that we can shade with pure black and lighten with the beige.

Shades of white



White can be a difficult colour to handle. Many painters suffer from the phenomenon of thickening paint on the highlights and stains from washes leaving numerous watermarks. Except for the most extreme highlights, pure white should be avoided (in the same way pure black shouldn't be used to shade). **Use premixed greys instead which will make your life much easier.** The trick to painting white is to systematically substitute off-white paints or another mixture for white. Watch out, you should not confuse brightness and luminosity! Indeed, the white pigment can tarnish colours and add an unruly, chalky aspect to your highlights. The alternative is to use bright colours containing a bit of a warm hue instead of white, often yellow. Once blended, the differences are negligible while providing a more brilliant, less aggressive, and cleaner result.



VERUS - Figone - 54 mm

WELCOME TO THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF CAMAÏEU AND MONOCHROME

Reducing the number of colours used to paint a picture or a miniature is a real technical challenge but also a great way to enhance the light and atmosphere without distracting the viewer with the juxtaposition of too many colours. **Taking this concept to an extreme, a camaïeu (a french word that is explained in detail below) is the use of a limited amount of colour to paint a model, creating highlights and shadows using a harmony of tints taken from the same colour.** Painting a camaïeu can be rather technical, so it is important to know the exact color scheme beforehand to avoid getting lost.

So what makes the right colour scheme? Deciding the colours at the start of the project can help, i.e. choose the colours to use on each element of the miniature before beginning to paint, but how do we choose? Well, when certain (can we say talented?) painters get together to talk and exchange ideas (and secret handshakes), they often discuss something which can seem very cryptic to the new painter: harmony. **To harmonize something means to create unity in the variety, it does not mean uniformity.**

So, it is finally time to reveal the big secret of prize-winning miniature painting: a successful miniature is a harmonious miniature. Therefore, the right colour scheme is a harmonious colour scheme – et voila!

OK, so it's not as simple as that to find a harmonious colour scheme. They aren't just lying around. Be aware that above all, it is a question of taste. Everything depends on the painter. But don't panic, there are solutions; to begin with let us look at the convenient example of the camaïeux.

What is a camaïeu?

A camaïeu is a set of colours that you pick carefully, similar to monochromatic paint, with a little bit more spark than is possible with a single colour. It comes from the fact that you select a dominant colour, and all the other colours are used to accentuate, de-saturate, or otherwise subtly affect it.

A simple colour scheme achieved with a limited palette can have as much impact as a piece done with a lot of vivid colours. It is very interesting to create emphasis on a monochromatic subject. To paint a monochromatic piece is a good exercise to train your eye to catch nuances in colours on a subject that appears without different colours. You may be surprised by the amount of colour you can observe in a shade when you really take the time to examine your subject.



A miniature is said to be painted "en camaïeux" when the colour scheme uses the same colour with different nuances across the model. A camaïeux can be used on the whole figurine or just on parts of it. Painting a highlighted zone is a bit little like painting a localised camaïeux (the same colour is used with differing tints) but it can equally be applied to the whole model. For example, choose at least two elements to paint with the same colour but in different tones, one shaded and the other highlighted.



ROCCO - Figone - 54 mm

How to create an emotional monochrome scheme

Certain miniatures are unusual because they contain only one colour or consist of only one homogenous area, for example, a fantasy elemental manifestation. It is possible in this case to paint the figurine with only one colour and this is known as a monochrome.

Painting a monochrome figurine is no more difficult than described above; we have to try to define the volumes with a zenithal light by remembering to leave dark zones in the recesses and bright zones on the reliefs - it is an opportunity to play with beautiful blending.



ELVEN QUEEN - Sculpted by Jérémie Bonamant Teboul

A painting with a monochromatic colour scheme is made of only one colour with different tonality where the hue varies in intensity and value.

Pick your combination of colour, and try to paint with a "monochromatic feel". The painting of this elf all in fabric and armor is done with a very simple palette of blues and greens, heightened with a hint of purple.

NEVER LEAVE THE VIEWER UNMOVED

Crafting a beautifully painted miniature is not just a question of precision and flawless blending. You also need to create a unique atmosphere and to provide an original interpretation of the model. Before you start painting, ask yourself these questions: What kind of personality does this character have? Where is he going? What is he doing? What's time of day is it? What is the weather like? Your choice of colours should depend on the answers to these questions and on your own gut feeling. Your mastery of colour is what will allow you to evoke sensations of coolness and warmth in the viewer and direct your model's narrative.

Colour is whimsical and wild; it's not easy to tame. The theoretical explanations presented here are only meant to serve as a foundation onto which to build your own sense of colour through research, experimentation, and experience. **Colour mastery is a lifelong pursuit and there is always something new to learn.** What we can achieve today depends on our research and the work that we have done in the past. Each painter should interpret this information in his own way and evolve in his own personal understanding and use of colour. Now, you have no excuse for leaving your viewer unmoved!







N'ACHETONS PAS
CE QUI EST A JETER

OGM
NON MERCI

le monde n'est pas
une marchandise

le monde n'est pas
une marchandise



BEFORE THE CURTAIN FALLS...

So, is it finished?

No, not yet! A final review is essential and it is the most important assessment - one which must leave you satisfied. You need to take a break from your creation before you can consider your work complete.

"...It is necessary to leave the time for time to show you the large and the small errors of your work," Titian told his pupils. And Titian strictly followed his own advice. He was used to walking away from the picture he had just painted and to revisit it later - to see it again - as he said, "...when the time during which the consciousness falls asleep and where everything appears differently, had passed by."

I'm not going to insist you do that much, just that once you think you're done, stop working, and take some time away from the project. Ideally, sleep on it and come back to your work the next day. Then you can reassess your subject with a clear head and an open mind.

In the same way that different paragraphs of a chapter make up a coherent whole, **so LIGHT and COLOUR are intimately connected as part of a greater whole**. Even though they are discussed in two separate chapters here to simplify the learning process, light and colour must work together to achieve a common goal: to produce an emotional response in the viewer...

The next books in the FIGOPEDIA series will adopt a similar approach, but you shouldn't consider these volumes to be entirely different subjects and topics. Look at them as the various ingredients of a single discipline which can help you to create beautiful miniatures.

Have you made the connection between the principles of this work and its cover? Perhaps not. Rest reassured that the following volumes will treat the applications, painting techniques, and the materials which I use more directly.

A final word of warning: **don't feel obliged to rigidly apply the principles explained in this volume to all of your painting**. The colours and lighting you choose and how you choose to use them should be deliberate, personal, artistic choices. This approach to colour theory can provide a foundation on which to build, but it doesn't adapt to all situations. Sometimes the theory just doesn't work as expected, so avoid stubbornly clinging to preconceived plans and an expectation that this type of painting will provoke this type of response in the viewer. Be flexible **and adapt your painting to your goals as you paint**. You will stumble upon certain recipes that you will want to repeat and repeat on other subjects. However, the impact will be greater if they are used sparingly on key parts of your miniatures to strengthen a specific point.

Many people think that art just springs from the hands of an artist. Being evocative and suggestive, art must appear "as if by magic". If it has become more intuitive and spontaneous for me, it is thanks to **apprenticeships, maturation, and the constant enrichment which continues throughout life**. Persevere and never give up!

Remember that a large part of this book is subjective. Be critical of what I have written. I thought differently a few years ago, and I will probably think differently in the future. Nothing should be taken as absolute truth; think rather of enriching your own experience with advice from others. **And above all, do not simply copy me!** Cloning only leads to intergalactic wars with overrated special effects. ;)

THANKS

I would like to thank some people in particular who have made my "figurinistic" life so much richer, in particular Allan Carrasco for his friendship, advice, and the mutual imitation we developed through four years of living together.

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More generally, I want to thank all the people who have provided constructive criticisms, helped me to progress, encouraged me not to give up, and all those who asked me questions about my work which sharpened my critical eye, ever since the first time I put brush to miniature.

It was twenty years ago.

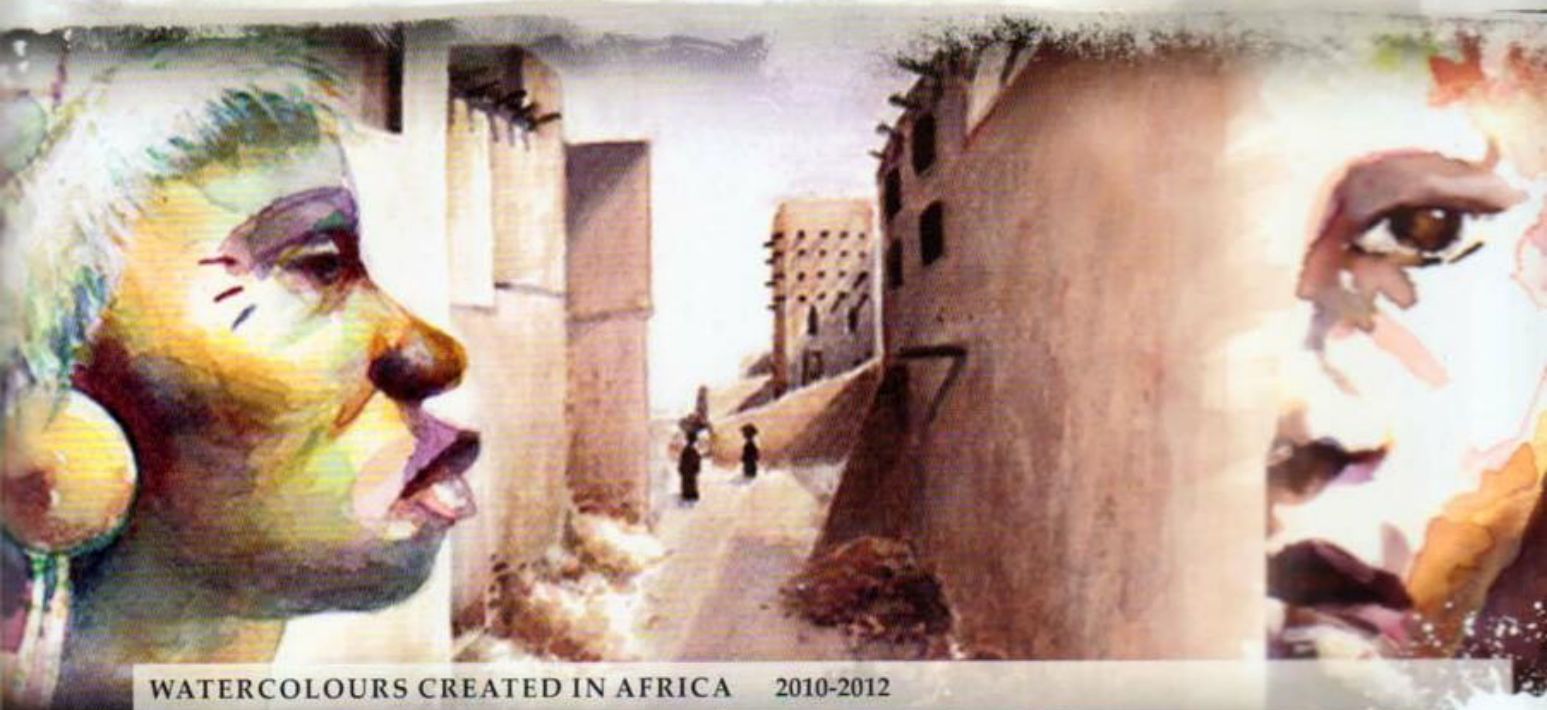
Special thanks to the proof readers, thanks for your time : Chris Borer, John Harrison & John Keys

I would like to thank all who participated in the campaign to finance this book from the bottom of my heart. Thank you for your support, for the long wait before you could hold it in your hands and for your confidence in financing this project without knowing what you were going to get. We have poured all our love into this book and it is largely dedicated to you!

So now it's your turn to share the knowledge you have acquired ... I am going to continue my apprenticeships and I hope I will have plenty of opportunities to share this knowledge with you!

Happy painting!

Jérémy Bonnamy Jeboul



Start painting miniatures ...like a pro!



"For more than 20 years, Jérémie has assimilated techniques, methods, and styles from all corners of our little world; both through his presence in most gatherings and his creative experimentations. He is a sort alchemical cauldron into which you've thrown all manner of ideas and knowledge from all over the world. He is also the peculiar material that would come out of that mix; enriched, fused, and blended with his own experience to be equally useful to novices and professionals."

Allan Carrasco

"A miniature painting journal by
Jérémie Bonamant Teboul"



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